



12¢

MAR.
NO. 385



Detective  Comics presents

BATMAN and BATGIRL



WHAT ARE
YOU GAPING AT?

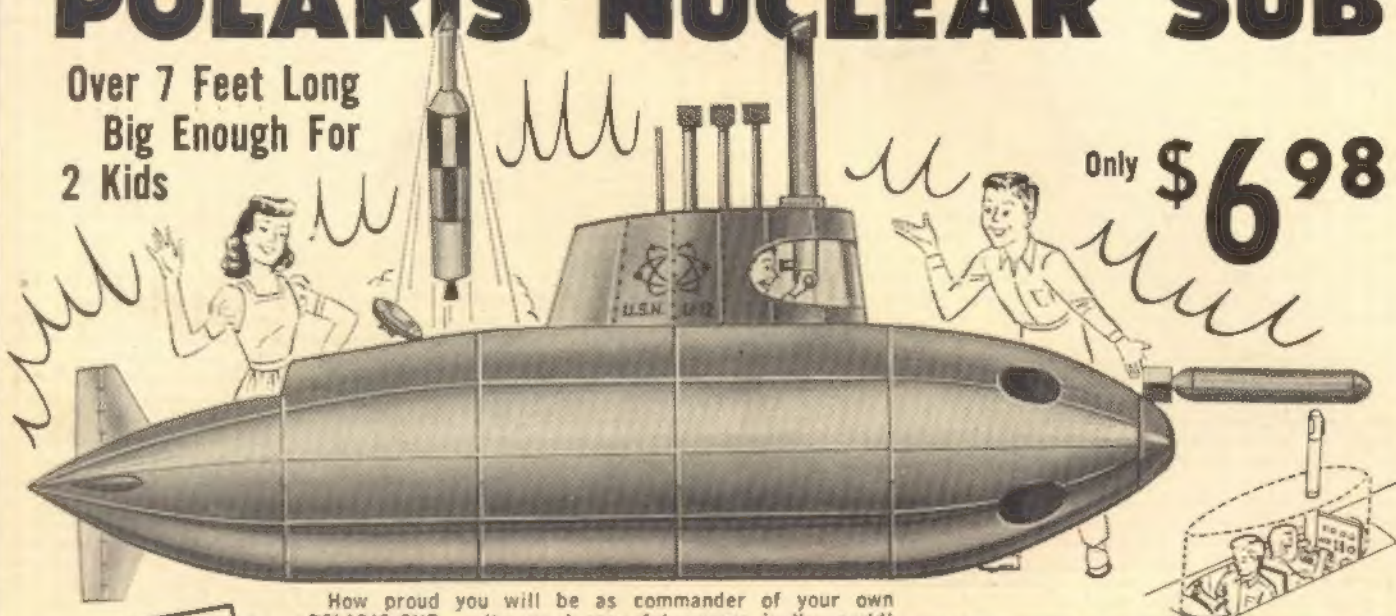
**BATMAN,
BEWARE!
WITHIN 24 HOURS,
YOU'LL BE
DEAD!**

"DIE
small--
DIE BIG!"

POLARIS NUCLEAR SUB

Over 7 Feet Long
Big Enough For
2 Kids

Only \$6⁹⁸



FEATURES

- Over 7 feet long
- Seats 2 kids
- Controls that work
- Rockets that fire
- Real periscope
- Firing torpedoes
- Electrically lit instrument panel

How proud you will be as commander of your own POLARIS SUB — the most powerful weapon in the world! What hours of imaginative play and fun as you and your friends dive, surface, maneuver, watch the enemy through the periscope and fire your nuclear missiles and torpedoes! What thrills as you play at hunting sunken treasures in pirate waters and exploring the strange and mysterious bottom of the deep ocean floor!

HOURS AND HOURS OF ADVENTURE

Sturdily constructed of 200 lb. test fibreboard. Comes complete with easy assembly instructions. Costs only \$6.98 for this giant of fun, adventure and science. (Because of the POLARIS SUB'S giant size we must ask for 75c shipping charges.)

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Order today and we will rush your POLARIS NUCLEAR SUB to you. Use it for 10 full days. If you don't think it is the greatest ever—the best toy you ever had—just send it back for full purchase price refund.

10 DAY FREE TRIAL

HONOR HOUSE PROD. CO. DEPT. 86PS51
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KARATE JIU JITSU

JUDO, BOXING, SAVATE,

Isometric Muscle Building,

Endurance, Stunts, etc.

Only
\$1⁰⁰



Here is what you get!

- 20 best KARATE Blows and Chops
- SAVATE French foot fighting
- Nerve center anatomy chart
- JUDO throws, Jiu Jitsu holds
- Isometric muscle building course
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With Combination Lock

Only You Can Open

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MONSTER SIZE SKELETON

Glow in the dark
Full 5 feet tall

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1⁷⁵

This 5 foot Mr. Bones is scary enough at any time — but wait till you see him IN THE DARK in all his horrible, spine chilling grandeur, eyes glowing like fiery coals.

Shake him and his arms, legs and head move ... you'd swear he's alive! If you like to haunt houses and frighten friends this is for you! Or hang "bones" in your room and you'll never be alone. Great fun at parties too. Just send \$1.75 plus 25c postage and handling for each skeleton you want. Money back if you are not sufficiently horrified.

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STORY
BY:
BOB
KANIGHER

BATMAN

ART BY:
BOB BROWN
&
JOE GIELLA

RR-ING RRING RR-ING

LAUGHTER RIPPLES
IN WAVES AT
BRUCE WAYNE'S
BIRTHDAY PARTY
ATTENDED BY ALL
HIS FRIENDS--
WHEN IT IS CUT
SHORT BY A
CLAMOROUS
RINGING...

THAT'S ODD!
I DON'T EXPECT
ANYONE ELSE! WHO
COULD IT BE?

I'LL
ANSWER
IT, SIR!

BY JOVE! SOMEONE
HAS LEFT A PRESENT!
A LIFE-SIZE FIGURE
OF BATMAN!

NO ONE
IN SIGHT! WHO-
EVER DELIVERED
IT--DIDN'T WANT
TO BE SEEN!...
WONDER WHY--?

LOOK!
THERE'S
A NOTE
PINNED TO
ITS BACK!

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WITH EVERYONE'S TRANSFIXED STARE RIVETED ON HIM, BRUCE (BATMAN) WAYNE INTONES THE OMINOUS NOTE, AWARE THAT ONLY TWO PEOPLE IN THE ROOM--DICK (ROBIN) GRAYSON, AND ALFRED, THE BUTLER--ARE AWARE THAT IT IS DIRECTED AT HIM!...

"BATMAN--
BEWARE! A SECRET
CONSPIRACY HAS PLANNED
YOUR MURDER! WITHIN 24
HOURS YOU WILL BE
DEAD!"

IN A SHATTERING MOMENT THE MERRIMENT AT BRUCE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY TURNS INTO A WAKE! FOR THE SHADOW CAST BY THE SINISTER WARNING WILL RESULT IN A CATASTROPHIC ENDING! AS YOU WILL SEE IN...

"DIE SMALL--
DIE BIG!"



AND AS THE DOOMED MAN IS CARRIED ALONG LIKE FLOTSAM ON THE TIDE OF THE LIVING IN GOTHAM CITY...

NO ONE NOTICES ME ...IT'S AS IF I AM ALREADY A GHOST!

THAT'S THE WAY IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ...AND SOON... IT WILL BE AS IF HERBERT SMALL NEVER EXISTED...

THAT'S
THE WAY IT'S
ALWAYS BEEN
...AND SOON...
IT WILL BE AS
IF **HERBERT**
SMALL NEVER
EXISTED...

I'VE BEEN BUYING MY PAPERS HERE FOR YEARS... BUT THE NEWS-DEALER NEVER RECOGNIZES ME...

I'VE
BEEN BUY-
ING MY PAPERS
HERE FOR YEARS
... BUT THE NEWS-
DEALER NEVER
RECOGNIZES
ME...

TO HIS LONELY ABODE TRUDGES HERBERT SMALL--HIS ONLY LISTENER, A MOURNFUL CANARY WHO NEVER SINGS...

ONLY YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I IDOLIZE BATMAN! NOW THERE'S A REAL HERO! IF ONLY I COULD ACT JUST ONCE IN MY LIFE LIKE HIM--I'D DIE GLADLY!

BUT ALL I CAN DO IS MAKE FIGURES--AND IMPERSONATE PEOPLE--AS IF TO COMPENSATE FOR MY OWN LACK OF IDENTITY!

ONLY YOU KNOW
HOW MUCH I IDOLIZE
BATMAN! NOW THERE'S
A REAL HERO! IF ONLY
I COULD ACT JUST
ONCE IN MY LIFE
LIKE HIM--I'D
DIE GLADLY!

BUT ALL I
CAN DO IS MAKE
FIGURES--AND
IMPERSONATE
PEOPLE--AS IF
TO COMPENSATE
FOR MY OWN
LACK OF IDENTITY!

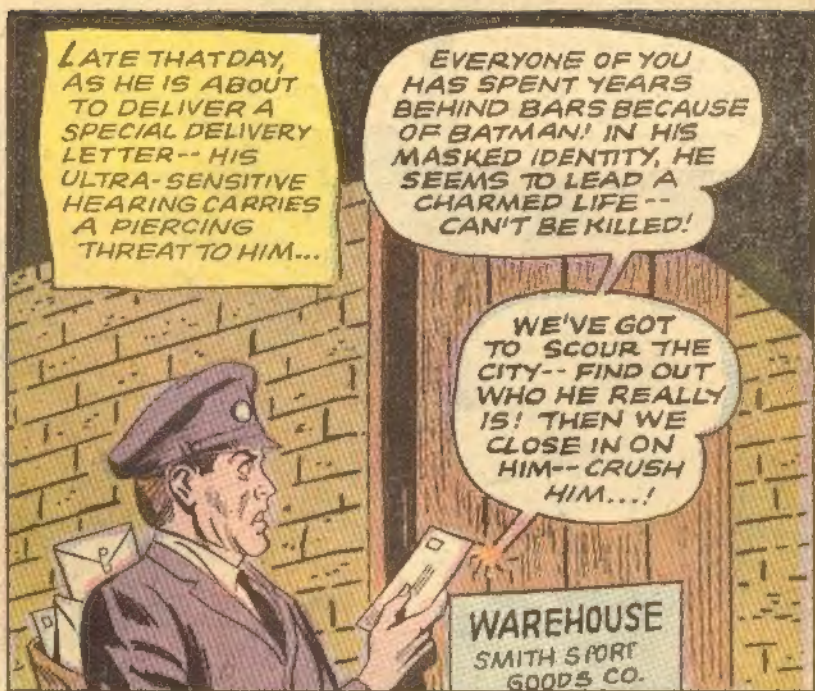
TO THE GROCERY MAN-- I'M FACELESS, TOO! WHEN I DON'T SHOW UP ANYMORE... HE'LL NEVER MISS ME!



BUT LIFE MUST GO ON...AND AS MAILMAN HERBERT SMALL GOES OUT ON HIS DAILY ROUNDS... A HUMAN SPECK AMONG THE BUSTLING THROGS OF PEOPLE...

THE SOUND OF THEIR BREATHING-- LIKE THE CRASH OF NIAGARA FALLS IN MY EARS!...MY END CAN'T BE FAR OFF!

BUT I MUST KEEP GOING... UNTIL I FALL...



LATE THAT DAY, AS HE IS ABOUT TO DELIVER A SPECIAL DELIVERY LETTER-- HIS ULTRA- SENSITIVE HEARING CARRIES A PIERCING THREAT TO HIM...

EVERYONE OF YOU HAS SPENT YEARS BEHIND BARS BECAUSE OF BATMAN! IN HIS MASKED IDENTITY, HE SEEMS TO LEAD A CHARMED LIFE -- CAN'T BE KILLED!

WE'VE GOT TO SCOUR THE CITY-- FIND OUT WHO HE REALLY IS! THEN WE CLOSE IN ON HIM-- CRUSH HIM...!

WAREHOUSE
SMITH SPORT
GOODS CO.



AGHAST, THE ALARMED MAIL-MAN STUMBLES BACK INTO THE STREET, DEAFENED BY THE THUNDER OF HIS OWN HEART --WHEN, A FEW MINUTES LATER...

HERE THEY COME-- THE CONSPIRACY OF KILLERS! NO ONE NOTICES ME! BUT I'LL NEVER FORGET A SINGLE ONE OF THEIR FACES!



THOSE THREE... PROWLING TOGETHER! GOT TO FOLLOW THEM ... FIND OUT WHAT THEY INTEND TO DO! IT'S THE ONLY THING I CAN THINK OF!



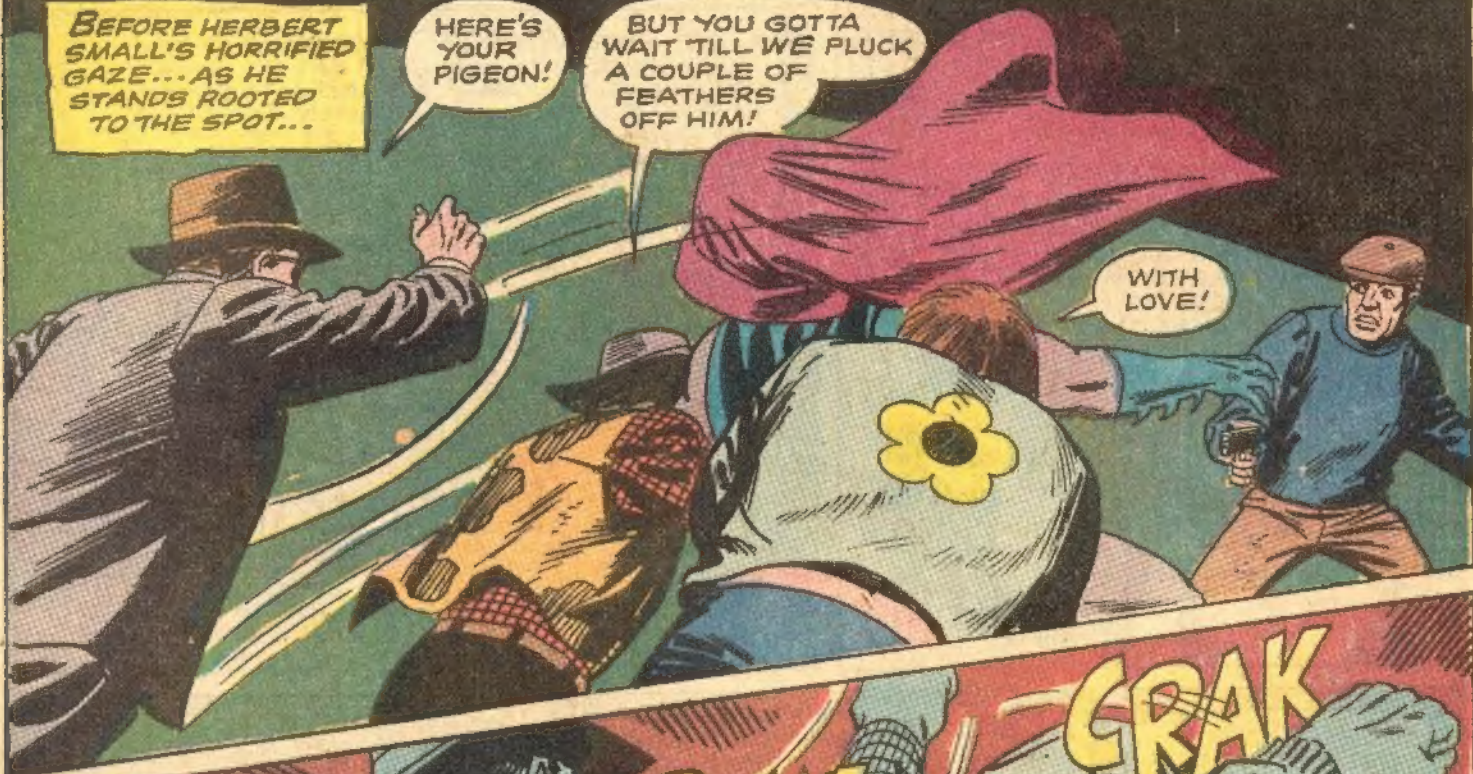
SOON AFTER AS A DAZZLING FATE WOULD HAVE IT, BATMAN HIMSELF BACKS OUT OF AN ALLEY, UNDER THE MENACING GUN OF A KILLER HE HAD BEEN PURSUING...

BEFORE HERBERT SMALL'S HORRIFIED GAZE...AS HE STANDS ROOTED TO THE SPOT...

HERE'S YOUR PIGEON!

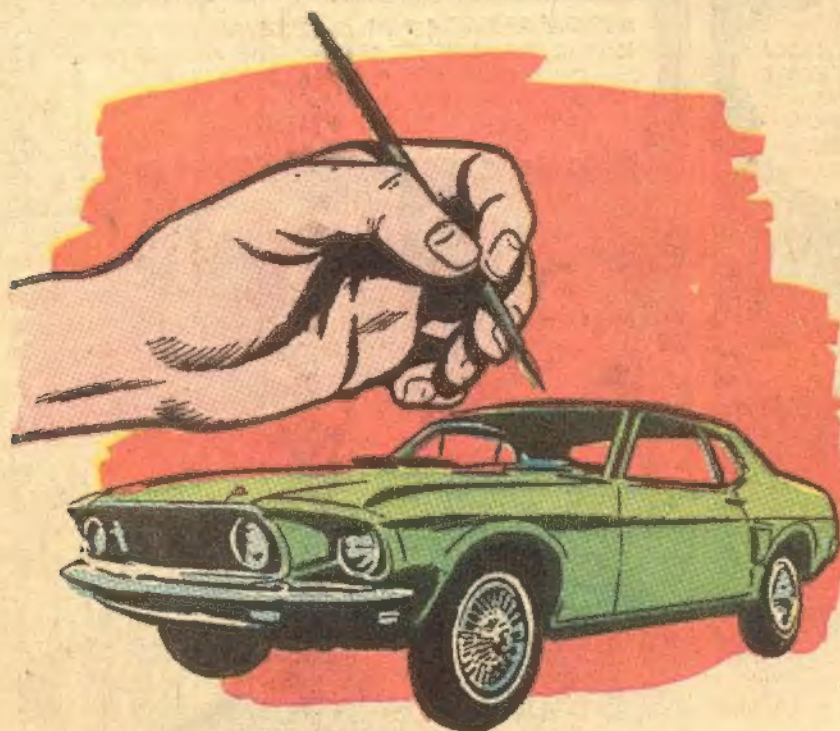
BUT YOU GOTTA WAIT TILL WE PLUCK A COUPLE OF FEATHERS OFF HIM!

WITH LOVE!



CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

6



CRAZY HORSE

Build him yourself! This '69 Mustang model kit is rarin' to go. The 428" Cobra Jet Engine would unleash 335 horses...if it were real! Revell's new model of the '69 Mustang takes only a few fascinating hours to build. And you can build him a variety of ways. Build him convertible or build him hard top. Build him stock or build him street modified (he has optional things like racing slicks and mag wheels). Build him Drag and hold on! He's less than \$2.00, wherever toys or hobbies are sold.

Send 35¢ for new 1969 color catalog of Revell kits.
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January Model of the Month
1969 Ford Mustang

THE ZEROIDS™

ARE HERE!

FROM THE PLANET ZERO...
THE INCREDIBLE AUTOMATONS
FROM OUTER SPACE.

MOVING ACROSS THE
LANDSCAPE, OVERRUNNING
OBSTACLES, THESE AMAZING,
FEARLESS AND POWERFUL
AUTOMATONS HAVE BUT ONE
PURPOSE... TO SERVE
THEIR MASTERS --
YOU!

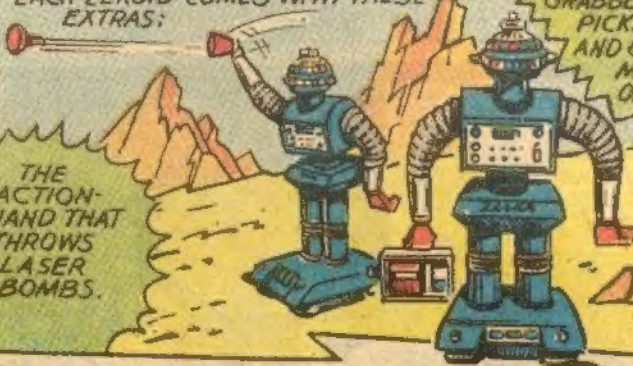
**ZERAK, THE BLUE
DESTROYER, FREES HIM-
SELF FROM HIS OWN CON-
TROL STATION. HIS BRUTE
STRENGTH FORCES
THE EXIT RAMP INTO
POSITION, AND HE
EMERGES WITH
FIGHTING FISTS
READY FOR
ACTION !!!**



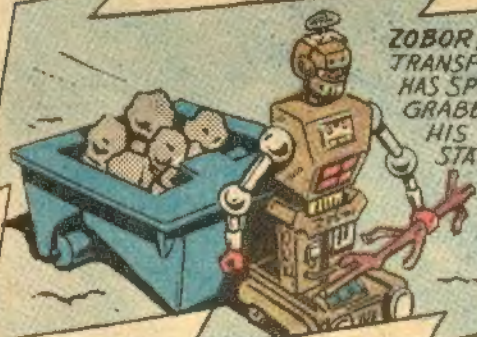
EACH ZEROID COMES WITH THESE
EXTRAS:

THE
ACTION-
HAND THAT
THROWS
LASER
BOMBS.

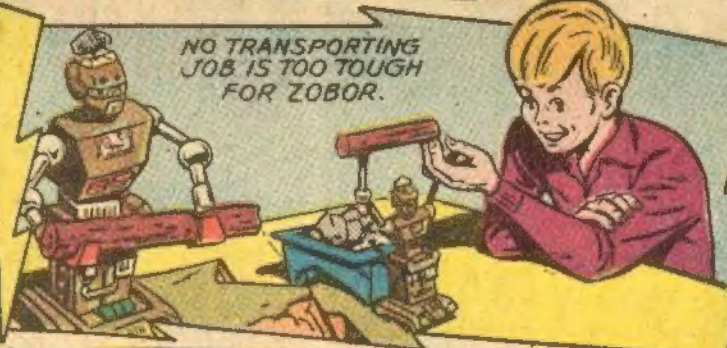
THE MAGNETIC
GRABBER THAT
PICKS UP
AND CARRIES
METAL
OBJECTS.



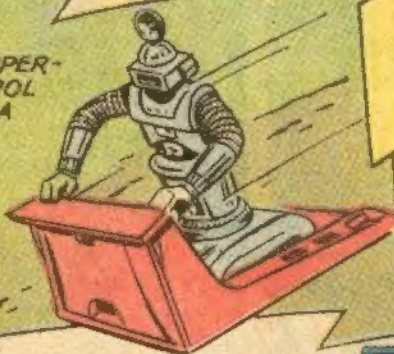
**ZOBOR, THE BRONZE
TRANSPORT ROBOT,
HAS SPECIAL DUTY
GRABBING-HOOKS.
HIS CONTROL
STATION BECOMES
A COSMOBILE
FOR HAULING
HEAVY LOADS.**



NO TRANSPORTING
JOB IS TOO TOUGH
FOR ZOBOR.



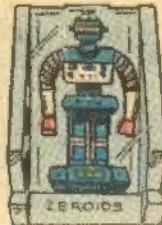
**ZINTAR, THE SILVER
EXPLORER, IS GRIPPER-
FISTED. HIS CONTROL
STATION BECOMES A
DRAMATIC LUNAR
SLED THAT
MOBILIZES HIM
FOR ACTION.**



ZINTAR HAS THE
POWER TO BATTER
HIS WAY THROUGH
ANYTHING.



EACH ZEROID COMES WITH A UNIQUE
PAIR OF SPECIAL PURPOSE HANDS PLUS
MAGNETIC AND THROWING REVERSING FOR ACTION
JOBS PLUS AN AUTOMATIC REVERSING TILE.
ALL ZEROIDS ARE EQUIPPED WITH A FORWARD
AND REVERSE MOTOR-POWERED TREAD-DRIVE
SO THEY CAN HAUL, BATTER, RAM, ATTACK,
LAUNCH, TRANSPORT, FIGHT-- ANYTHING !!!



THE ZEROIDS™

BROUGHT TO
EARTH BY



BEFORE THE HORRIFIED EYES OF THE MAN WHOM NO ONE NOTICES-- BAT-MAN WHIRLS LIKE A MADDENED MATADOR, AND WITH A RIPPING BLOW OF HIS TEARING FIST...

BLAM!

YOU'RE NOT GOIN' OFF THE SPOT, BAT-ULLLLPHHH!

THIS IS AN UNTENANTABLE SPOT! MIND IF I VACATE THE PREMISES?

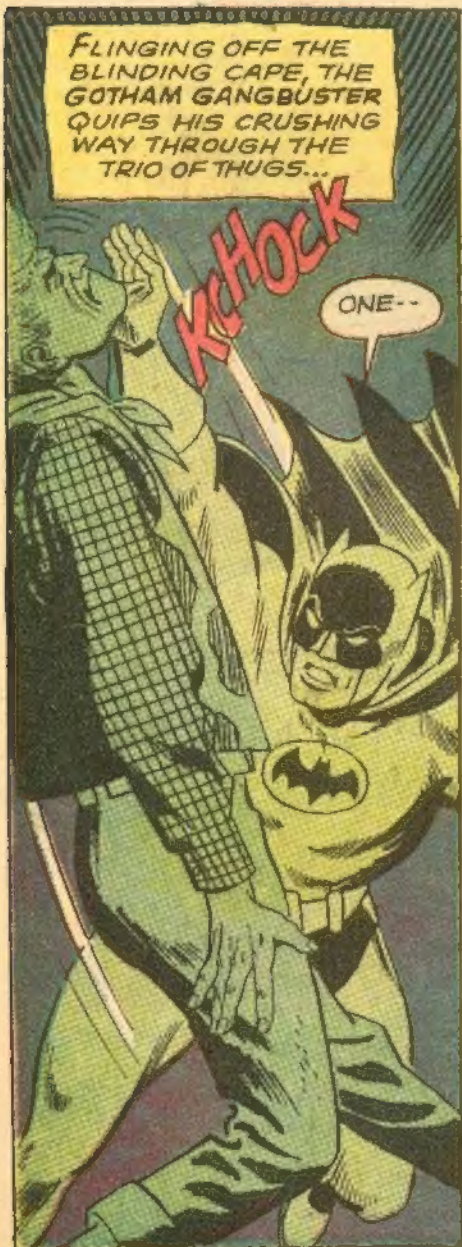
KROO



FLINGING OFF THE BLINDING CAPE, THE GOTHAM GANGBUSTER QUIPS HIS CRUSHING WAY THROUGH THE TRIO OF THUGS...

KCHOCK

ONE--



WHUNK

TWO--



WHA-M

THREE-- AND AWAY YOU GO!





THEN-- IN A FINAL
BURST OF VOLCANIC
FORCE...

THE GEESE
WILL HANG HIGH
TODAY!

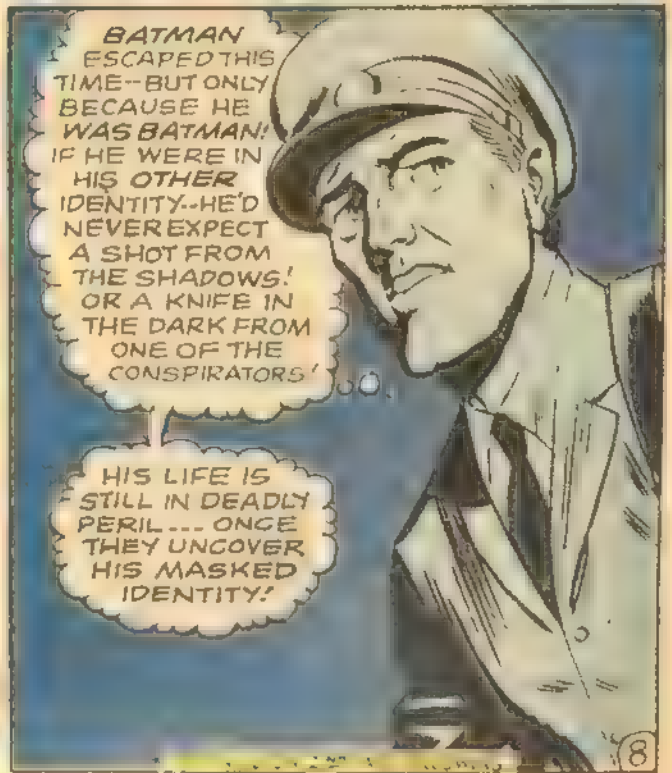
CRUMMP

ARRRRGH



THE POLICE--COMING
ON THE RUN TO NET
BATMAN'S "GEESE"!

THEY DON'T
NOTICE ME! ANY-
MORE THAN IF I
WERE A PART
OF A WALL!

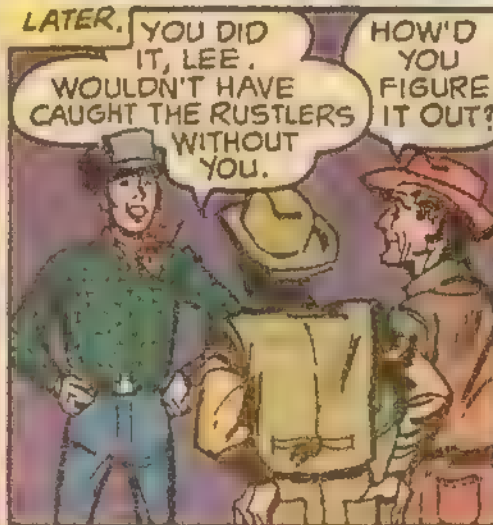
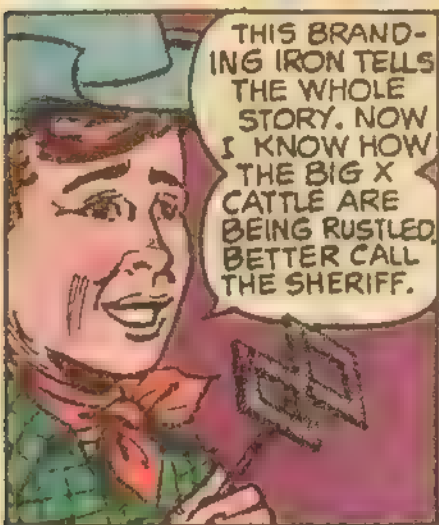
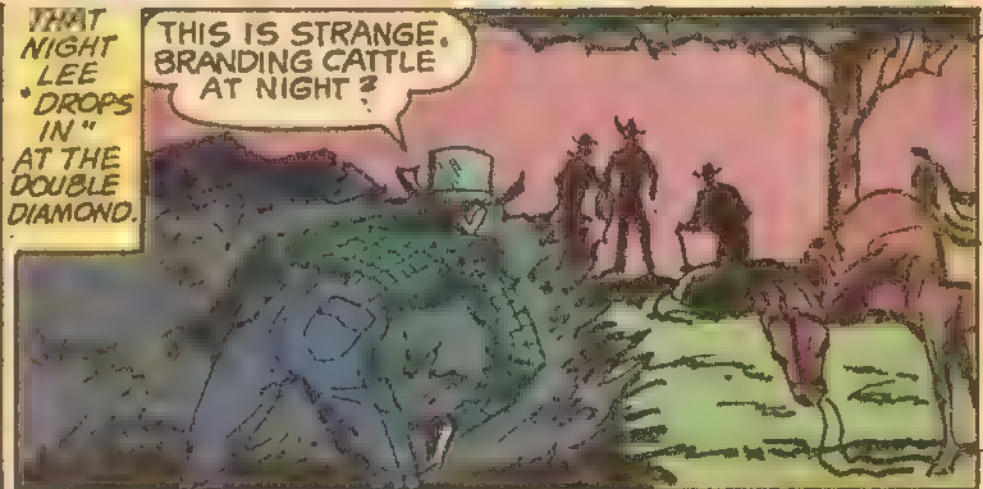
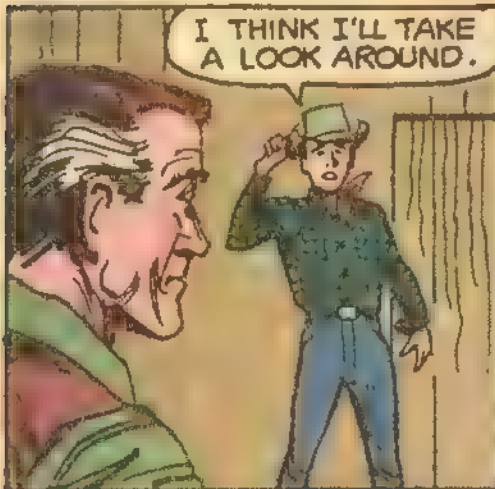
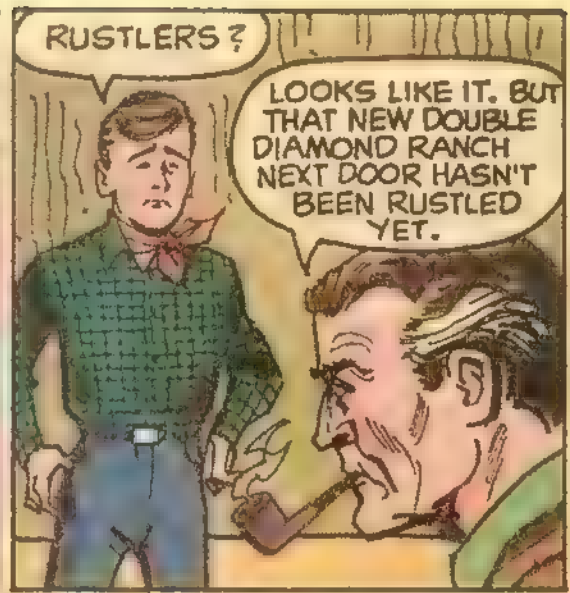
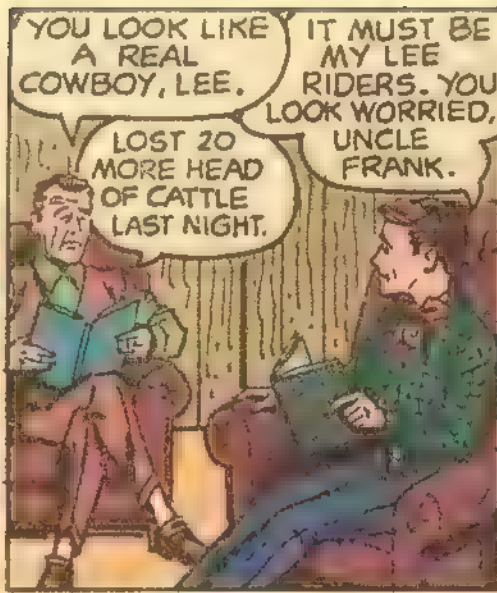


BATMAN
ESCAPED THIS
TIME--BUT ONLY
BECAUSE HE
WAS BATMAN!
IF HE WERE IN
HIS OTHER
IDENTITY--HE'D
NEVER EXPECT
A SHOT FROM
THE SHADOWS!
OR A KNIFE IN
THE DARK FROM
ONE OF THE
CONSPIRATORS!

HIS LIFE IS
STILL IN DEADLY
PERIL... ONCE
THEY UNCOVER
HIS MASKED
IDENTITY!

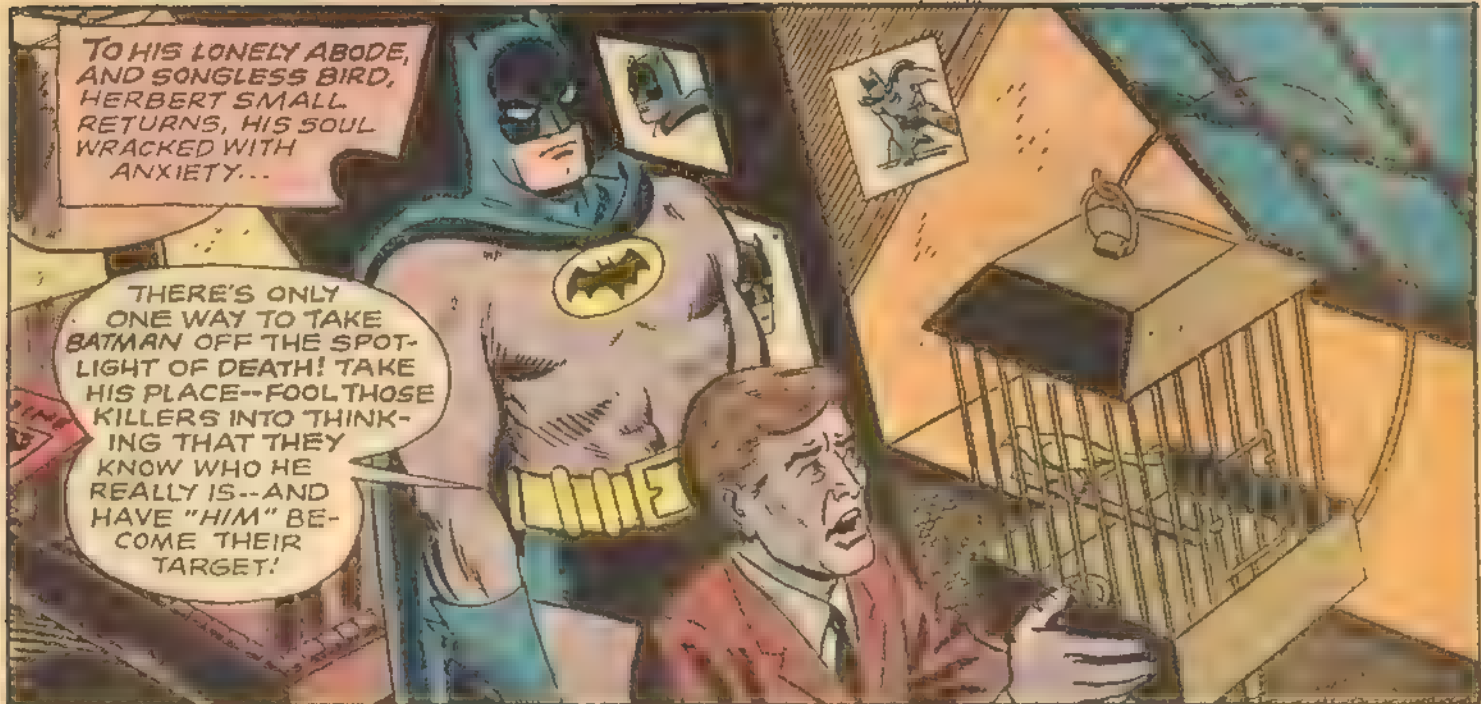
Lee Rider in The Brand Rustlers

LEE RIDER VISITS HIS
UNCLE FRANK'S BIG X
RANCH.



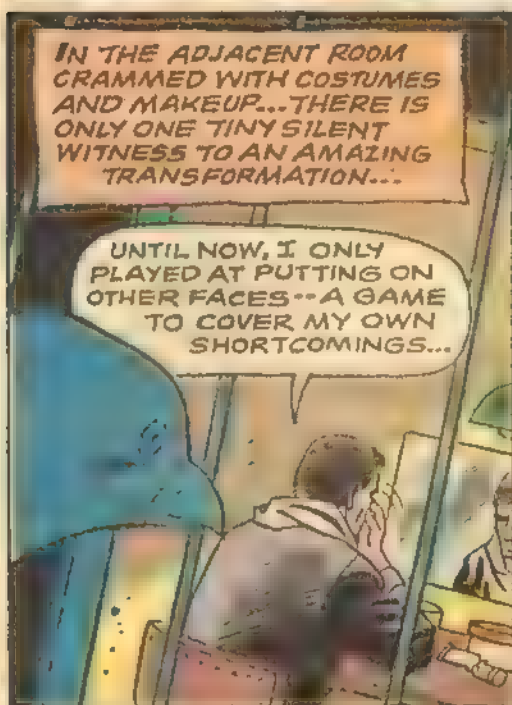
BOYS! WEAR THE WESTERN PANTS THAT REAL
COWBOYS WEAR - LEE RIDERS. THEY'RE TOUGH!
THEY'RE CUT RIGHT! THEY HAVE THE GENUINE
LEE BRAND ON EVERY PAIR.





TO HIS LONELY ABODE,
AND SONGLESS BIRD,
HERBERT SMALL
RETURNS, HIS SOUL
WRACKED WITH
ANXIETY...

THERE'S ONLY
ONE WAY TO TAKE
BATMAN OFF THE SPOT-
LIGHT OF DEATH! TAKE
HIS PLACE--FOOL THOSE
KILLERS INTO THINK-
ING THAT THEY
KNOW WHO HE
REALLY IS--AND
HAVE "HIM" BE-
COME THEIR
TARGET!



IN THE ADJACENT ROOM
GRAMMED WITH COSTUMES
AND MAKEUP...THERE IS
ONLY ONE TINY SILENT
WITNESS TO AN AMAZING
TRANSFORMATION...

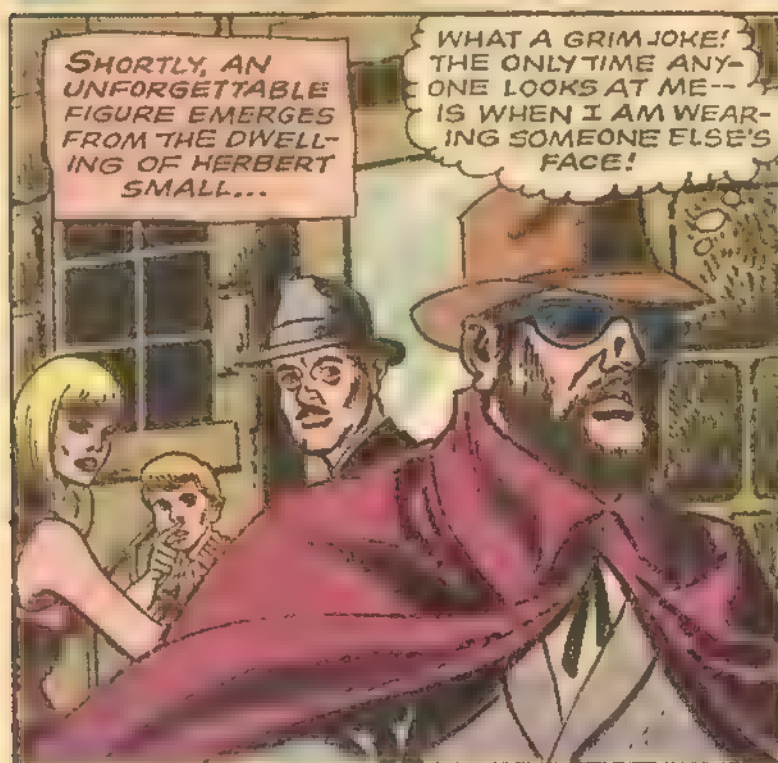
UNTIL NOW, I ONLY
PLAYED AT PUTTING ON
OTHER FACES--A GAME
TO COVER MY OWN
SHORTCOMINGS...



NOW I'VE
GOT TO DON THE
FACE OF ONE OF THE
KILLERS THAT WAS
SEARED INTO
MY MEMORY--

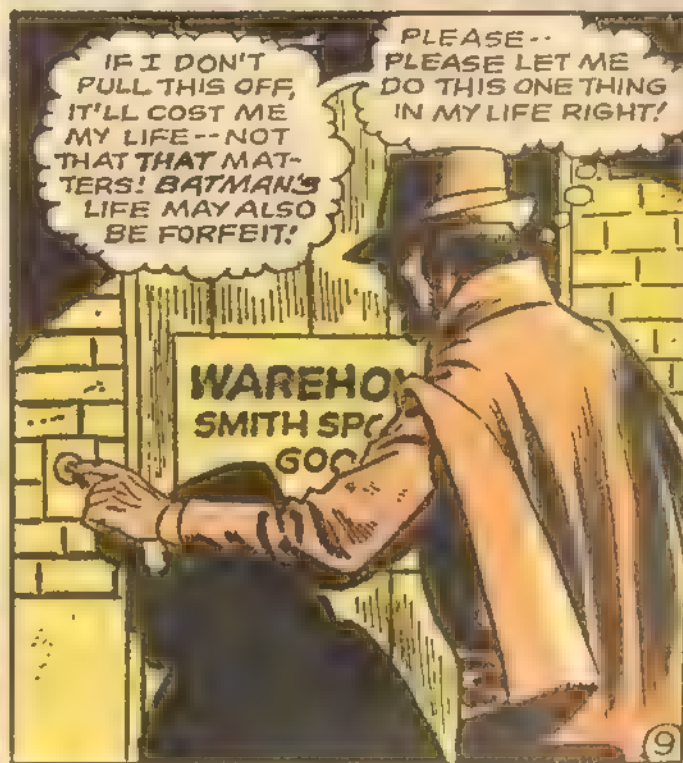


AND DO WHAT I
HAVE TO DO!



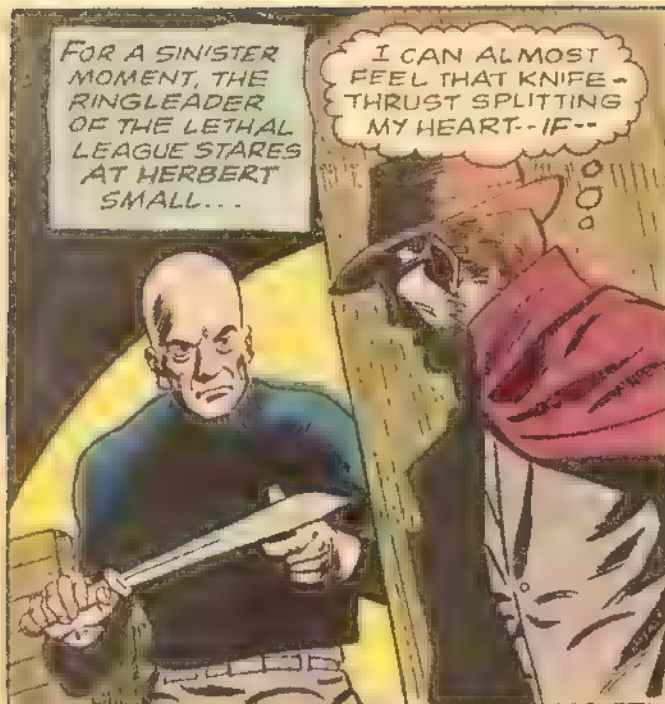
SHORTLY, AN
UNFORGETTABLE
FIGURE EMERGES
FROM THE DWELL-
ING OF HERBERT
SMALL...

WHAT A GRIM JOKE!
THE ONLY TIME ANY-
ONE LOOKS AT ME--
IS WHEN I AM WEAR-
ING SOMEONE ELSE'S
FACE!



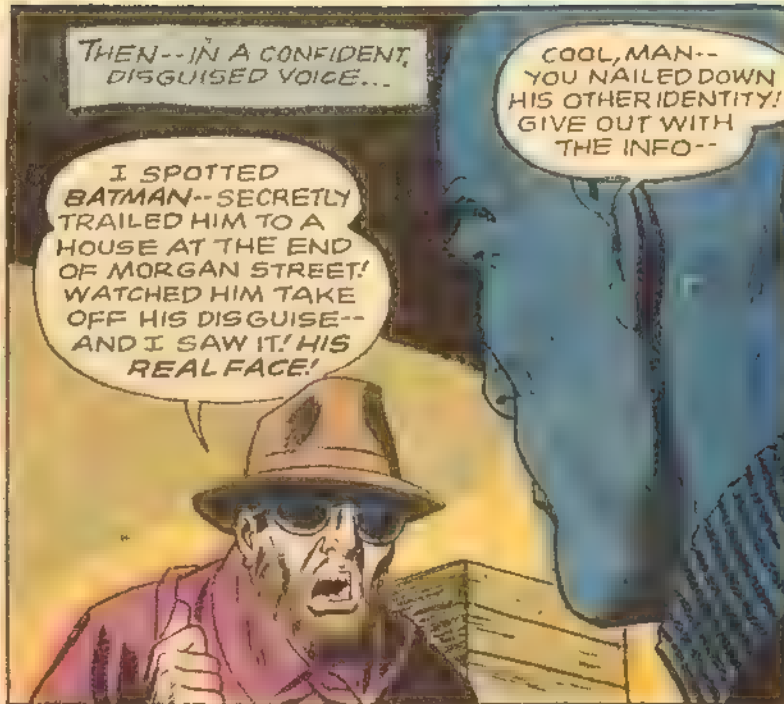
IF I DON'T
PULL THIS OFF,
IT'LL COST ME
MY LIFE--NOT
THAT THAT MAT-
TERS! BATMAN'S
LIFE MAY ALSO
BE FORFEIT!

PLEASE--
PLEASE LET ME
DO THIS ONE THING
IN MY LIFE RIGHT!



FOR A SINISTER
MOMENT, THE
RINGLEADER
OF THE LETHAL
LEAGUE STARES
AT HERBERT
SMALL...

I CAN ALMOST
FEEL THAT KNIFE-
THRUST SPLITTING
MY HEART-- IF--



THEN--IN A CONFIDENT,
DISGUISED VOICE...

I SPOTTED
BATMAN-- SECRETLY
TRAILED HIM TO A
HOUSE AT THE END
OF MORGAN STREET!
WATCHED HIM TAKE
OFF HIS DISGUISE--
AND I SAW IT! HIS
REAL FACE!

COOL, MAN--
YOU NAILED DOWN
HIS OTHER IDENTITY!
GIVE OUT WITH
THE INFO--

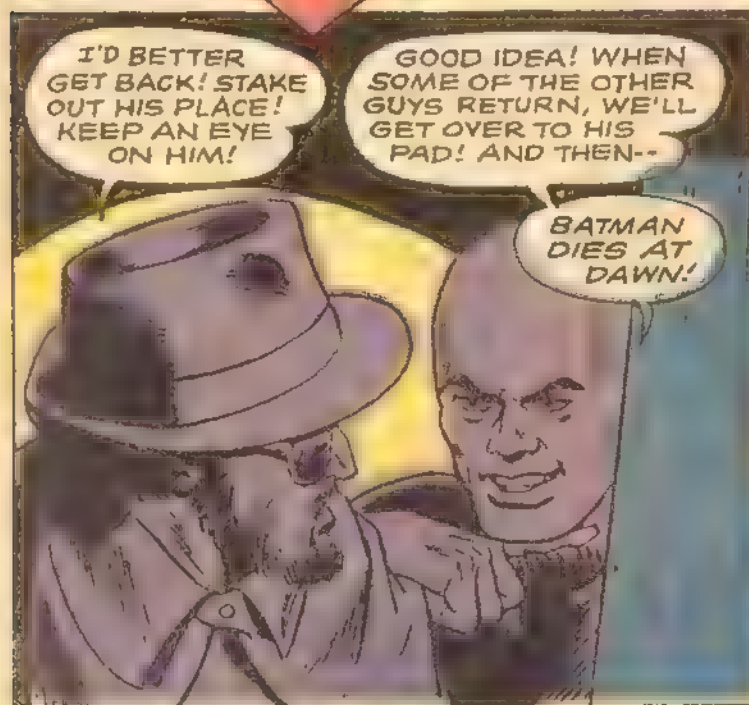


HE LIVES
IN A LOFT--IN
A ROOM FILLED
WITH HUNDREDS
O' DISGUISES! WITH
ONLY A CANARY
WISE TO HIS BEING--
AN ORDINARY MAIL-
MAN! HOW'S THAT
FOR A COVER?

HIS NAME,
MAN-- SPILL IT!

HERBERT
SMALL!

SO BIG SHOT
BATMAN TURNS
OUT TO BE A SMALL
GUY! AIN'T THAT
A LAUGH!



I'D BETTER
GET BACK! STAKE
OUT HIS PLACE!
KEEP AN EYE
ON HIM!

GOOD IDEA! WHEN
SOME OF THE OTHER
GUYS RETURN, WE'LL
GET OVER TO HIS
PAD! AND THEN--

BATMAN
DIES AT
DAWN!



OUTSIDE, A PANTING HERBERT SMALL
LEANS AGAINST THE DOOR, DESPER-
ATELY TRYING TO PULL HIS JANGLING
NERVES TOGETHER...

SO FAR, SO GOOD!
NOW FOR THE REST
OF MY PLAN TO
SAVE BATMAN'S
LIFE...

BACK IN HIS REAL SELF THE MAILMAN HURRIES TO WAYNE MANOR, LUGGING THE LIFE-SIZE FIGURE OF BATMAN...

RRRRRING

I READ THAT THE POLICE COMMISSIONER-- THE MAYOR-- WILL BE AT MR. WAYNE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY! THEY'RE BOUND TO ALERT BATMAN AFTER THEY SEE MY WARNING!

OH-- THE SOUND OF THAT BELL! IT'S LIKE A BOILER FACTORY!

THE DOOR'S OPENING! GOT TO GET OUT OF SIGHT!

BACK TO THE LONELY LOFT HERBERT SMALL SCURRIES... TO SWEAT OUT THE TERRIBLE HOURS... WHILE DEATH CLOSES IN ON HIM LIKE AN ICY VICE.

SQUEEEK

WHAT'S THAT RIPPING MY HEARING OUT?

IT-- IT'S JUST THE SQUEAK OF A CAR'S TIRES!

KRIIIK-
KRIIK
KRIIIK

N-NOW WHAT? IS IT THEM?

NO--! A MOUSE RUNNING ALONG THE FLOOR!

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

THAT ELEPHANT-LIKE TREAD! WH-WHAT IS IT?

A CAT RUNNING AFTER THE MOUSE! CAN'T STAND IT! I--I WISH THEY'D COME ALREADY-- AND BE DONE WITH IT!

MEANWHILE, HIS PARTY GUESTS LONG SINCE DEPARTED, BRUCE WAYNE CONCENTRATES ON THE UNKNOWN FACE, HIS COMPUTER-LIKE MEMORY RIFLING THROUGH THE PEOPLE HE HAS MET AND NEVER FORGOTTEN, STRAINING TO COME UP WITH THE RIGHT ONE...

I KNOW I'VE SEEN THAT FACE BEFORE! SOMETIME! SOMEWHERE! GOT TO FIND HIM! SAVE HIM! EVEN NOW--THE CLAWS OF THE UNDERWORLD MAY BE TEARING AT HIM-- THINKING HE'S BATMAN!

WHO IS HE? I... CAN... ALMOST... SEE HIM... BUT... STILL... HE ESCAPES ME!

IF ONLY YOU HAD A CLUE--!

TODAY'S MAIL, SIR! YOUR BIRTHDAY CARDS! YOU DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO GO THROUGH THEM!

MAIL--! ALFRED, YOU'VE GIVEN ME THE CLUE I NEED! NOW I KNOW WHOSE FACE THAT IS! A MAN YOU'D HARDLY EVER NOTICE... OUR MAILMAN!

HAVEN'T A MOMENT TO LOSE! I-- BATMAN'S--GOT TO FIND OUT WHO HE IS-- WHERE HE LIVES! FROM THE POST OFFICE!

HE'S TAKEN THE ELEVATOR DOWN TO THE BATCAVE-- DIDN'T EVEN ASK FOR ROBIN'S HELP!

THIS IS ONE CASE BATMAN PREFERS TO HANDLE ALONE, MASTER DICK!

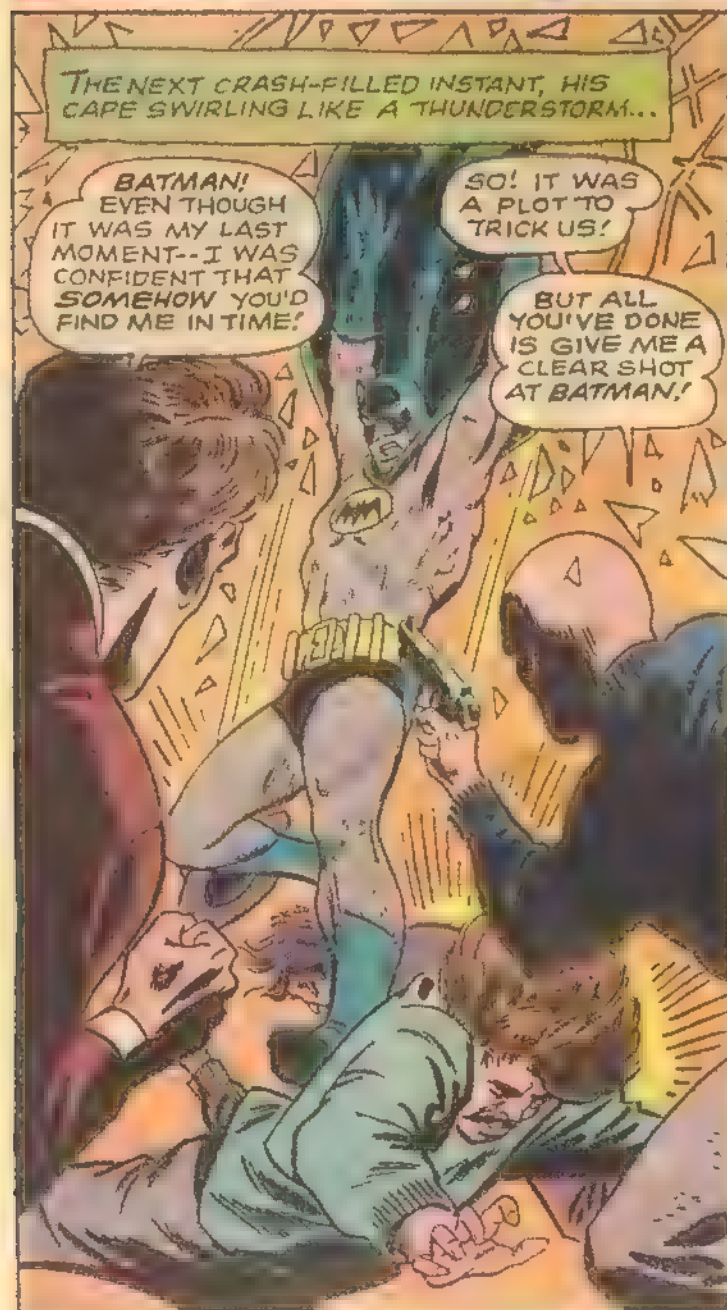


AS THE MURDEROUS HOUR DRAWS TO A CLOSE, IT FINDS BATMAN AT THE END OF HIS FRENZIED QUEST, POISED LIKE A SHAD-OWY BIRD OVER THE SKYLIGHT OF THE MAILMAN...

GANGLAND'S FOUND HERBERT SMALL, TOO!

NEVER THOUGHT WE'D TRACK YOU DOWN, DID YOU, BATMAN--ALIAS HERBERT SMALL, MAILMAN?

WELL-- HERE'S WHERE WE DELIVER THE GOODS TO YOU! AND IT'S ALL LEAD!



THE NEXT CRASH-FILLED INSTANT, HIS CAPE SWIRLING LIKE A THUNDERSTORM...

BATMAN! EVEN THOUGH IT WAS MY LAST MOMENT--I WAS CONFIDENT THAT SOMEHOW YOU'D FIND ME IN TIME!

SO! IT WAS A PLOT TO TRICK US!

BUT ALL YOU'VE DONE IS GIVE ME A CLEAR SHOT AT BATMAN!



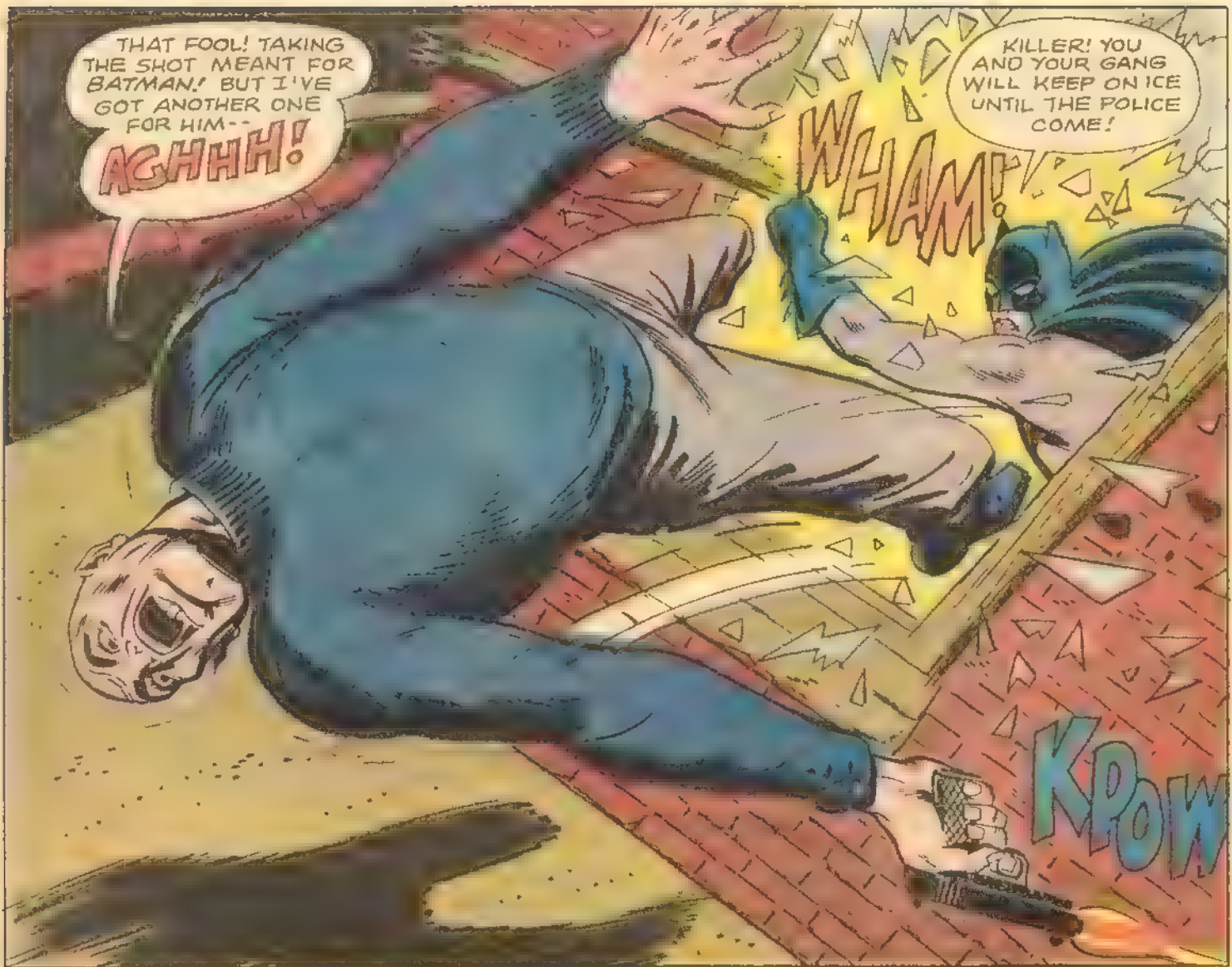
WITH THE CAPED CRUSADER IN THE MIDST OF A TERRIBLE TANGLE WITH THE MOB-- HERBERT SMALL HURLS HIMSELF BEFORE THE DEAFENING SHOT OF THE GANGLER.

YOU'RE A DEAD PIGEON, BATMAN-- HUH--?

HERBERT -- NO!

BLAM!

UHHHHH
THERE'S NOTHING ... I'D RATHER DO ... MORE--



SUDDENLY, UNACCOUNTABLY, THE HITHERTO MUTE CANARY BEGINS TO SING TRIUMPHANTLY! AND AS BATMAN PUTS HIS MASK BACK ON...

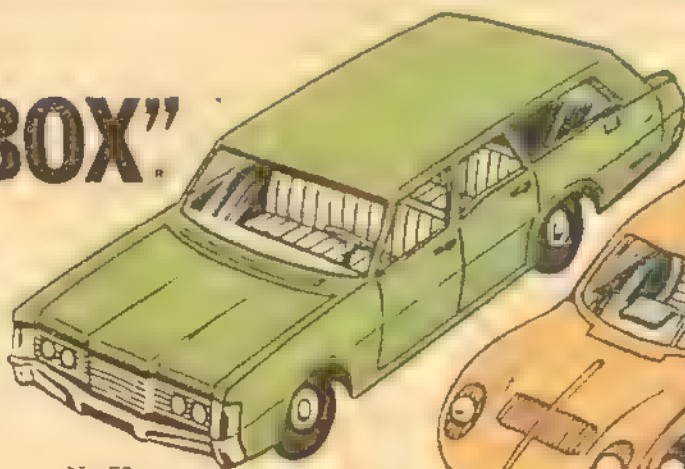
BUT HERBERT SMALL, DIDN'T DIE ... SMALL ...

HE DIED **BIG!**

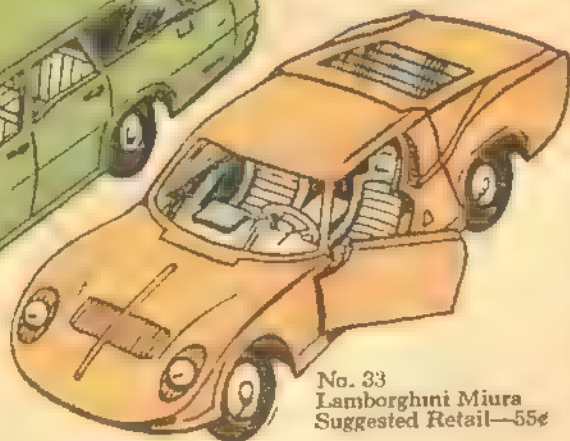
HE... DIED... HAPPY!

THE END

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Mercury Commuter
Suggested Retail—55¢



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Lamborghini Miura
Suggested Retail—55¢

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BATMAN'S HOT-LINE

Dear Editor:

Well, first there was the title, "One Drown — One More to Go!" You should be ashamed of yourself. Then there's *Albatross*, the cute little seal, who happily wears the Captain's hat after the Captain met with an unfortunate accident. I can't stand sadistic seals. And we end with the words of wisdom, "Old sea captains never die, etc., etc. . . ." Ugh!

Well, there was one good aspect of this story that appeared in the November *Detective Comics*. I used to believe, my friends, that a super-hero had the *Spectre*-given right to dodge any number of bullets, death-rays, or what-have-you, and to beat up on seven men at one sitting. I recant. Certainly super-heroes are better athletes than normal men, but unless they have super-powers, they can't do anything beyond reason. One thing that impressed me about the James Bond novels was that Bond relied more on his wits than on physical prowess, and that he was not a seven-with-one-blow man like *Batman*. All this made the novels more suspenseful. Like if the hero can't outrun a bullet, how does he keep from getting shot?

The Editor sits back in his chair and says gleefully, "At last Sanderson approves of non-extraordinary villains!" Wash out your mouth with soap, man! But realize, friends, the fighters of everyday detective novels and second-rate TV villains do not dress up in funny costumes and drive even funnier cars. Funny-costume heroes fight either funny-costume villains, or funny-business-suit villains like Johnny Witts and Roy Reynolds.

And therefore I make a radical proposal. The *Batman* audience has a pro-weird villain wing and a pro-everyday villain wing. I propose turning *Detective Comics* over to the super-villains and the Witts-Reynolds group, and the *Batman* magazine to the more everyday villains supporters. Then I (at least) would no longer write my anti-normal-villain tirades and would retire, *Detectives* in hand, to the Elysian Fields of Fandom, there to compose tributes to the goodness of DC editors everywhere.

—PETER SANDERSON, JR., Milton, Mass.

(You make your proposal so attractive, it almost makes us want to go ahead with it. But note that prudent use of "almost" — which keeps us in more reasonable bounds: a blending of both *Batman*-villain types for *Detective* and *Batman* mags. So for the sake of Pete, no retirement for Sanderson yet—which suits us fine, for your tirades are truly enjoyed by the — Editor)

Dear Editor:

Until I read "Batman Walks the Last Mile" in *Batman* #206, I had considered Frank Robbins a poor writer. Although his yarns brought out the eeriness in the *Caped Crusader*, the dialogue was entirely too campy. It seems that Robbins has been changing to more dramatic prose, which makes his stories read better—to me, at least. However, let us consider the conclusion of this issue's "One Drown—One More to Go!" We see a man (Captain Cyrus Hume) falling to his death. Death is the most sobering event that can take place in any story—any media. In the next panel (the last one of the story) we see the dead man's pet seal with his master's hat placed on his head and pipe in his mouth. In my opinion, it is *wrong* — horribly so — to try being jovial after such a tragic scene.

—MARK DILLMAN, Topeka, Kan.

(Robbins used the levity as an abrupt change of pace—and like the vaudeville-entertainers of a bygone day, wanted to "Leave the audience laughing" at the story's fade-out. — Editor)

Dear Editor:

Detective Comics #381 contained another Frank Robbins story, "One Drown-One More to Go!" It seems *Batman* is once again shown on top. Here we had what could be called a mystery-detective story. The fine pencils of Bob Brown along with the excellent inks of Joe Giella made the story all the better.

It appears that the *Elongated Man* is slated to leave the pages of *Detective Comics*, a gap that will be filled with the solo adventures of *Robin* and *Batgirl*. This, I believe, will prove to be most effective for *Detective*. (Say, those two words rhyme!)

Although I liked the stories within the covers, along with the Irv Novick cover, I thought the cover logo was . . . well . . . not what I'd call too appealing. I don't think *Batman* and *Robin* should be in larger print than *Detective Comics* — and besides, doesn't everyone know that *Batman* and *Robin* appear in *Detective Comics*, without having to scream it out loud in those large letters?

—WILLIAM R. LUND, Spokane, Wash.

(Ah! But does everyone know that the Dynamic Duo appears in *Detective Comics*? Our survey showed that many newcomers into comicdom were not aware that B&R are featured in *Detective*; and because only the upper portions of covers can be seen in most magazine racks, casual browsers—and potential buyers — skipped past *Detective Comics* without realizing it is a companion magazine to *Batman*. Hence the change in logo-design. — Editor)

Dear Editor:

Your cover on the November *Detective* was good with its title logo and all that—but must Irv Novick always draw *Batman* with his arms outstretched?

Down to business—I can't say as how I was overly fond of Frank Robbins' script this month. His work has gotten a trifle static, what with each month bringing an apparent quarrel between the *Peerless Pair*. And his "surprise" choice of villains left much to be desired . . . namely the *surprise*. Let's face it—your readers have demonstrated consistent intelligence and I doubt any could doubt Captain Spume's guilt from his first appearance.

The low point this time around is the topic of layouts. Whatever happened to the old six-panels-of-rectangular-shape-to-a-page bit? A diversification (in this case, slanted and overlapped panels) is a welcome element . . . but any diversification can become worn if repeated constantly.

—MARK EVANIER, Los Angeles, Cal.

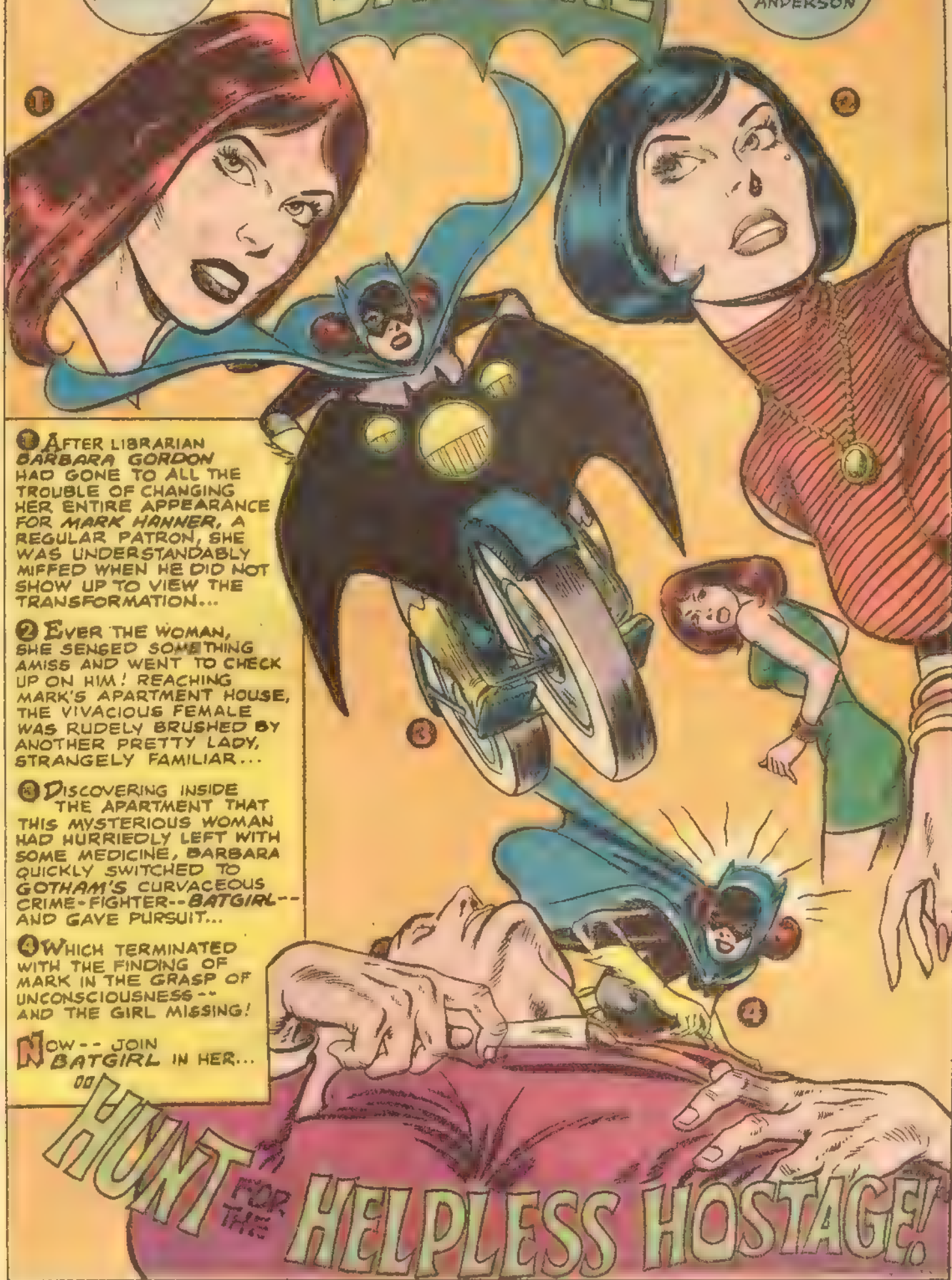
(We went more "square" (at least rectangular) with this issue. There'll be less emphasis on angular shots in the future. — Editor)

Address communications to BATMAN'S HOT-LINE, National Periodical Publications, 909 Third Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022.

STORY
BY:
MIKE
FRIEDRICH

BATGIRL

ART BY:
GIL KANE
&
MURPHY
ANDERSON



1 AFTER LIBRARIAN BARBARA GORDON HAD GONE TO ALL THE TROUBLE OF CHANGING HER ENTIRE APPEARANCE FOR MARK HANNER, A REGULAR PATRON, SHE WAS UNDERSTANDABLY MIFFED WHEN HE DID NOT SHOW UP TO VIEW THE TRANSFORMATION...

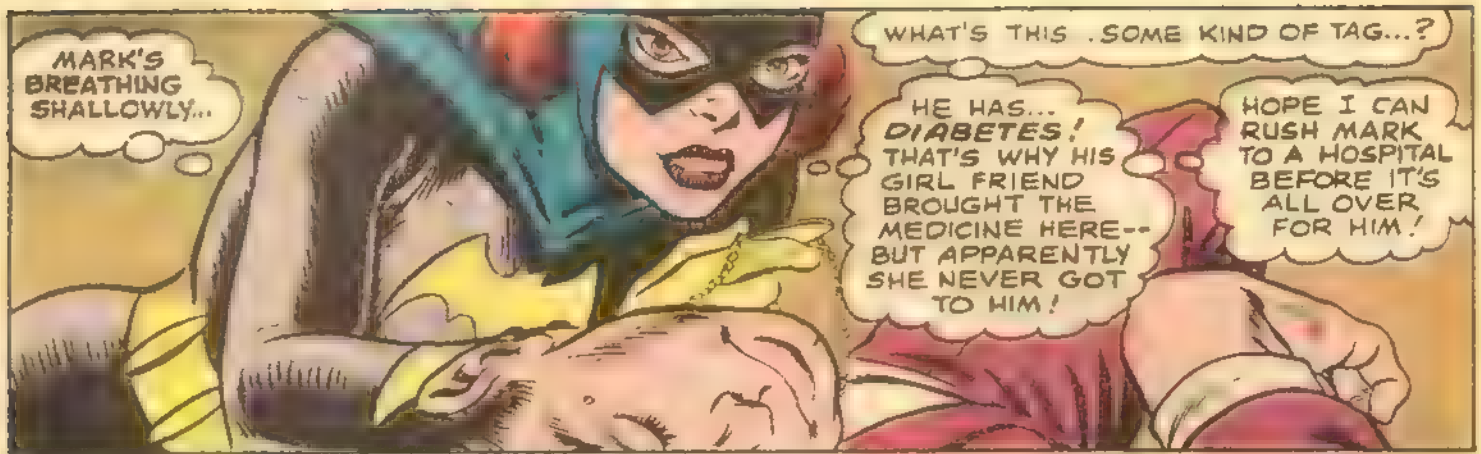
2 EVER THE WOMAN, SHE SENGED SOMETHING AMISS AND WENT TO CHECK UP ON HIM! REACHING MARK'S APARTMENT HOUSE, THE VIVACIOUS FEMALE WAS RUDELY BRUSHED BY ANOTHER PRETTY LADY, STRANGELY FAMILIAR...

3 DISCOVERING INSIDE THE APARTMENT THAT THIS MYSTERIOUS WOMAN HAD HURRIEDLY LEFT WITH SOME MEDICINE, BARBARA QUICKLY SWITCHED TO GOTHAM'S CURVACEOUS CRIME-FIGHTER--BATGIRL--AND GAVE PURSUIT...

4 WHICH TERMINATED WITH THE FINDING OF MARK IN THE GRASP OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS--AND THE GIRL MISSING!

NOW-- JOIN
BATGIRL IN HER...

HUNT FOR THE
HELPLESS HOSTAGE!



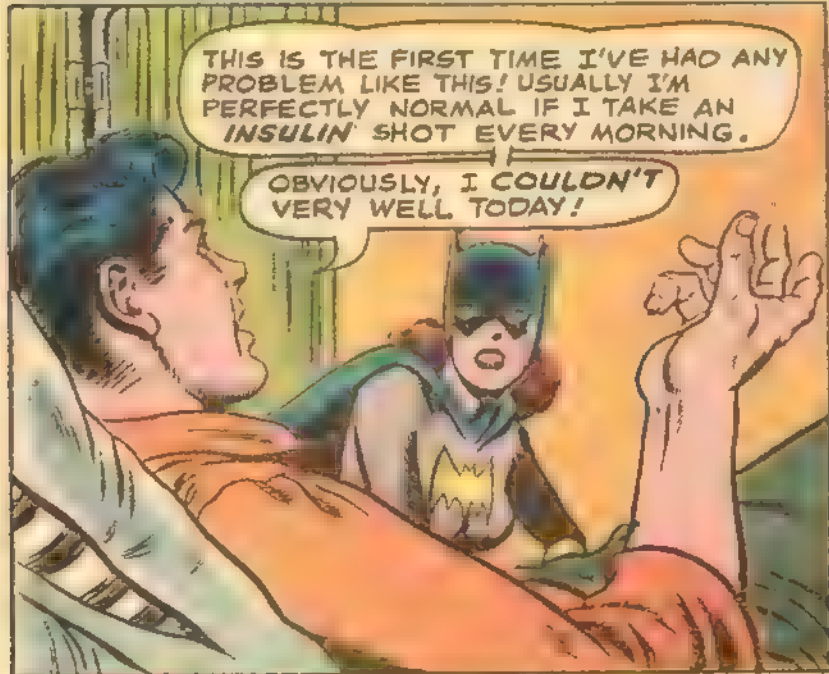
MARK'S BREATHING SHALLOWLY...

WHAT'S THIS .SOME KIND OF TAG...?

HE HAS...
DIABETES!
THAT'S WHY HIS
GIRL FRIEND
BROUGHT THE
MEDICINE HERE--
BUT APPARENTLY
SHE NEVER GOT
TO HIM!

HOPE I CAN
RUSH MARK
TO A HOSPITAL
BEFORE IT'S
ALL OVER
FOR HIM!

RUSHING THE COMATOSE MARK TO A NEARBY HOSPITAL FOR CARE, **BATGIRL** PHONES THE POLICE TO TRANSFER HER CAPTIVES OF COMBAT TO JAIL, THEN VISITS THE BEDSIDE OF THE MAN OF THE HOUR...



THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE HAD ANY PROBLEM LIKE THIS! USUALLY I'M PERFECTLY NORMAL IF I TAKE AN **INSULIN** SHOT EVERY MORNING.

OBVIOUSLY, I COULDN'T VERY WELL TODAY!



WAS **SHARON** AT THE GANG'S HANGOUT WHEN YOU GOT THERE?

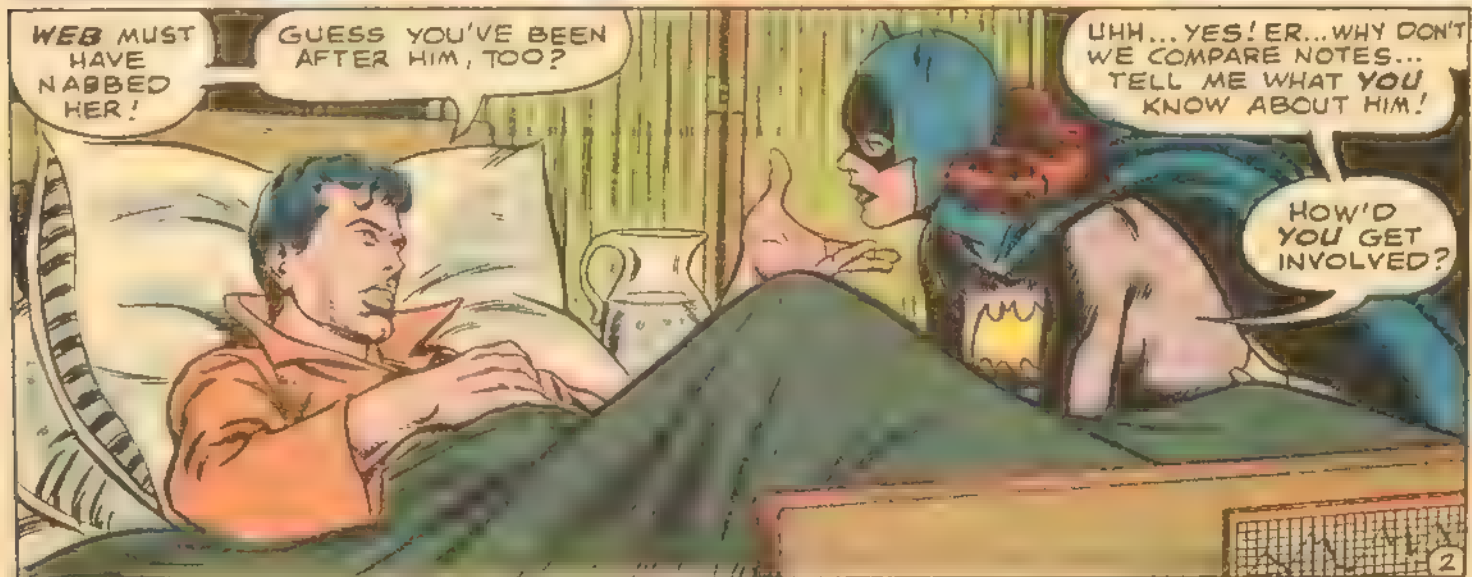
SHARON? OHH, YOU MEAN--
THAT GIRL?

NO...I DIDN'T SEE HER!

THEN SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO HER-- OTHERWISE SHE'D BE HERE!



HE'S VERY CONCERNED! **SHARON** MUST MEAN AN AWFUL LOT OF HIM! EXIT **BARBARA GORDON** ON A MAN-HUNT... ENTER **BATGIRL** ON A GIRL-HUNT!



WEB MUST HAVE NABBED HER!

GUESS YOU'VE BEEN AFTER HIM, TOO?

UHH...YES! ER...WHY DON'T WE COMPARE NOTES... TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM!

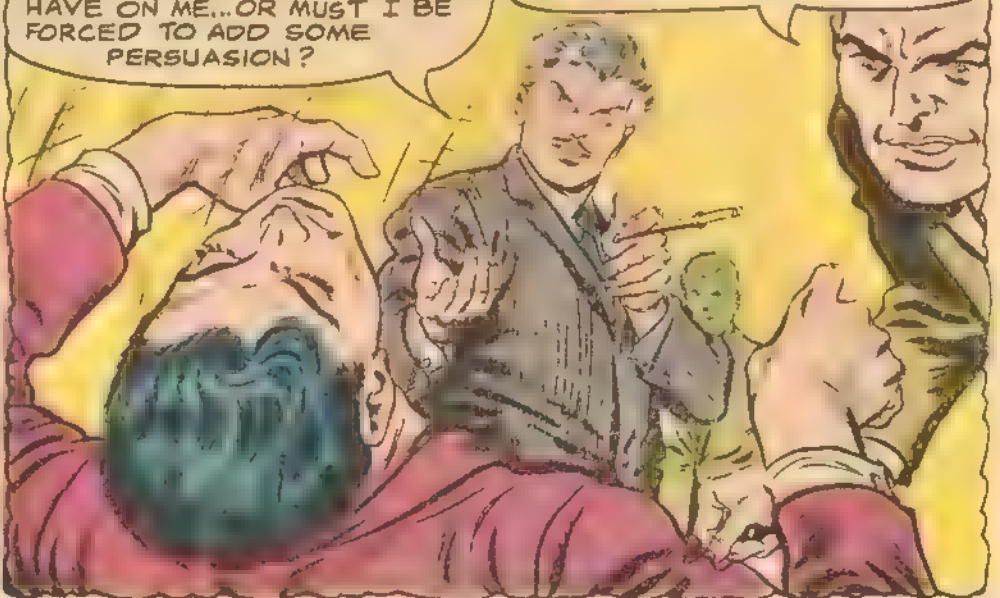
HOW'D YOU GET INVOLVED?

WELL, AS YOU KNOW, **WEB FOOTE** IS A BIG-TIME GANG-LEADER IN **GOTHAM CITY**! I'M A PRIVATE DETECTIVE AND THE **CITIZEN'S CRIME COMMISSION** HIRED ME TO PICK UP ENOUGH SOLID EVIDENCE TO BRING HIM TO TRIAL!

GUESS I TALKED TO ONE-TOO - MANY UNDERWORLD CHARACTERS, SINCE **WEB** CAME AROUND AND "REQUESTED" I LEAVE WITH HIM...

NOW, MR. HANNER, ONCE MORE-- REVEAL WHERE YOU PLACED THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE ON ME...OR MUST I BE FORCED TO ADD SOME PERSUASION?

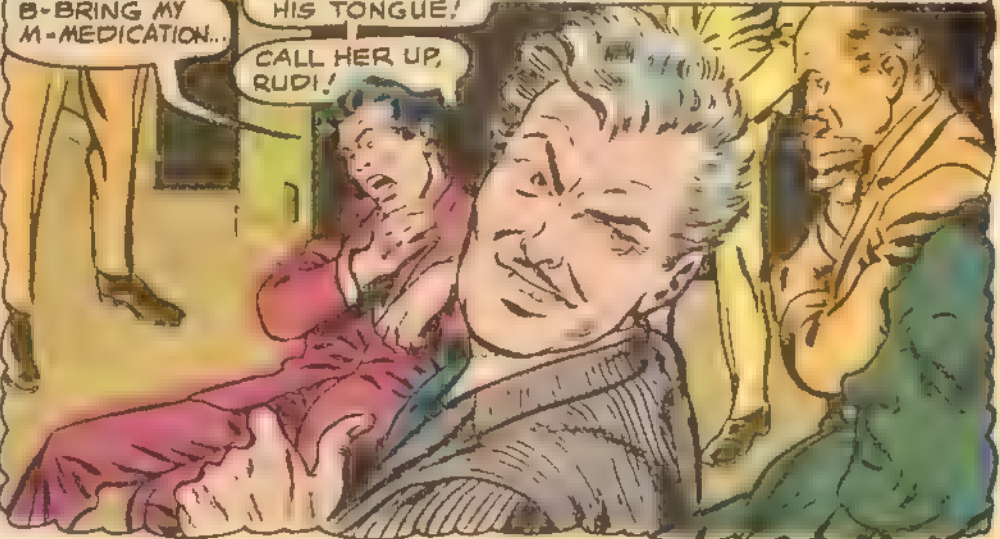
WEB...WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM? WE AIN'T DONE NOTHIN' YET TO MAKE HIM PASS OUT!



C-CALL MY APARTMENT...
SH-SHARON...
B-BRING MY M-MEDICATION...

HUH... THERE WAS NO ONE THERE LAST NIGHT WHEN WE SEARCHED HIS APARTMENT FOR THE EVIDENCE! BUT HAVING THIS **SHARON** HERE MAY AID IN LOOSENING HIS TONGUE!

CALL HER UP, RUDI!



"I WAS ALMOST OUT WHEN SHE ARRIVED! THE LAST THING I HEARD AS THEY BROUGHT HER IN WAS..."

BOSS, **BATGIRL**'S COMIN' IN THE FRONT DOOR! SHE'S ALREADY GOT PAST JIMMY OUTSIDE!

BATGIRL!? SHE NEVER OPERATES WITHOUT **BATMAN** CLOSE BEHIND!

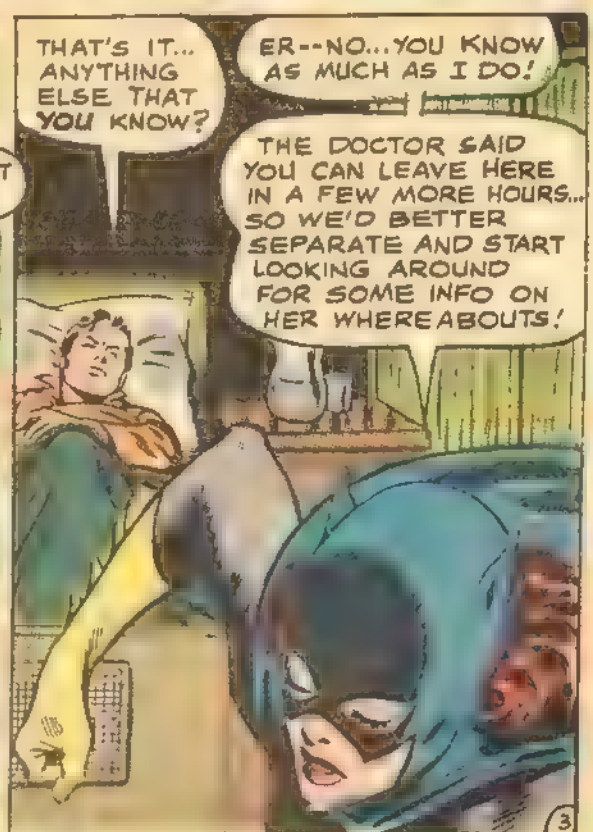
LET US DEPART QUICKLY...ALONG WITH THE GIRL!

SHE MAY BE HELPFUL AS A HOSTAGE!

THAT'S IT... ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU KNOW?

ER--NO...YOU KNOW AS MUCH AS I DO!

THE DOCTOR SAID YOU CAN LEAVE HERE IN A FEW MORE HOURS... SO WE'D BETTER SEPARATE AND START LOOKING AROUND FOR SOME INFO ON HER WHEREABOUTS!



RELEASED
THAT
EVENING
WITH
NO ILL-
EFFECTS,
MARK
QUICKLY
MOVES
UNDER-
GROUND...

DIG THE CHICK
DOING THE
OUTASITE
BUGALOO
UP THERE,
GARY!

BEAUTIFUL, MAN! AND SHE SURE
KNOWS HOW TO TIGHTEN UP TOO!
WHERE'S SHE BEEN ALL MY
LIFE?

NOT THAT MANY HOODS
COME TO THIS DISCO-
THEQUE IN GOTHAM
VILLAGE, BUT IT'S AS
GOOD A PLACE AS
ANY, SINCE I'VE LET
THE WORD GET AROUND
I'M LOOKING FOR
SHARON!

IT'S RISKY PARADING
AROUND LIKE THIS
IN THE OPEN AGAIN,
BUT I MUST REACH
SHARON SOMEHOW!

I HEAR YUH'RE LOOKIN' FOR
SOMEONE, HANNER!

LOOK, PUNK, I'M NOT PLAYING
ANY GAMES!

I KNOW WEB
SENT YOU!
WHERE'S
SHARON?

THE GIRL'S OKAY, BUT SHE WON'T BE
IF YOU DON'T DO AS WE SAY!

WE'VE GOT A NICE
TRADE... YOU! SO
BRING THE WEB
EVIDENCE AT MIDNIGHT
TO THE GROVE OF
TREES BY THE SKATING
LAKE IN GOTHAM PARK--
AND WE BRING THE
GIRL!

NO TRICKS...
WE'LL BE
WATCHIN'
YOU EVERY
STEP OF THE
WAY!

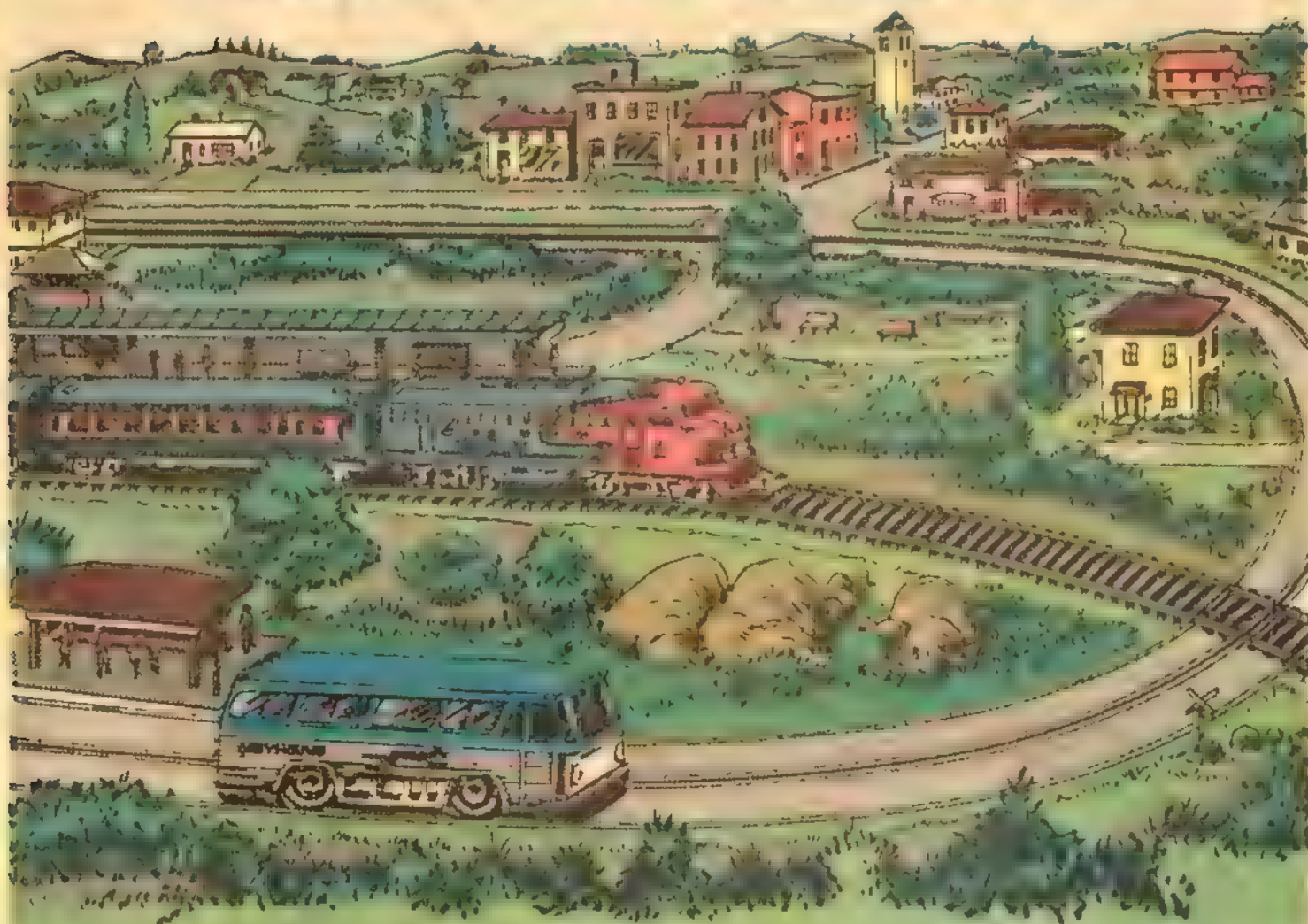
I KNOW IT'S A TRAP, BUT I DON'T
DARE CONTACT BATGIRL-- SHARON'S
LIFE MEANS TOO MUCH!

I'LL HAVE
TO GO IT
ALONE!

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AS IF TO SMOTHER THE SCENE IN THE PARK, WHEN GOTHAM'S CLOCKS CHIME TWELVE, A SUDDEN SNOWFALL MUFFLES THE SOUNDS..

ALL RIGHT, WEB...HERE'S THE EVIDENCE!...LET HER GO!

YOU CAN CALL OFF YOUR BLOOD-HOUNDS NOW!

SAY... ONLY TWO OTHERS HERE?... YOU'VE BEEN FAKING IT... THERE WASN'T ANYONE TAILING ME!

THOUGHT I WAS SLIPPING THERE FOR AWHILE WHEN I DIDN'T NOTICE ANYONE AFTER ME!

WELL, WELL...THE DETECTIVE HAS BRAINS! THE UNDER-WORLD FIGURED I WAS "HOT" WITH YOU AND BATGIRL ON MY TRAIL, SO THEY STEERED CLEAR OF ME... EXCEPT FOR CHARLIE AND "OLD FAITHFUL" HERE! BUT THAT DOES NOT HAVE ANY MORE SIGNIFICANCE SINCE I AM ENDING YOUR INTERFERENCE RIGHT NOW!

AND THE GIRL IS GOING WITH YOU! I CAN'T AFFORD TO LEAVE ANY WITNE--

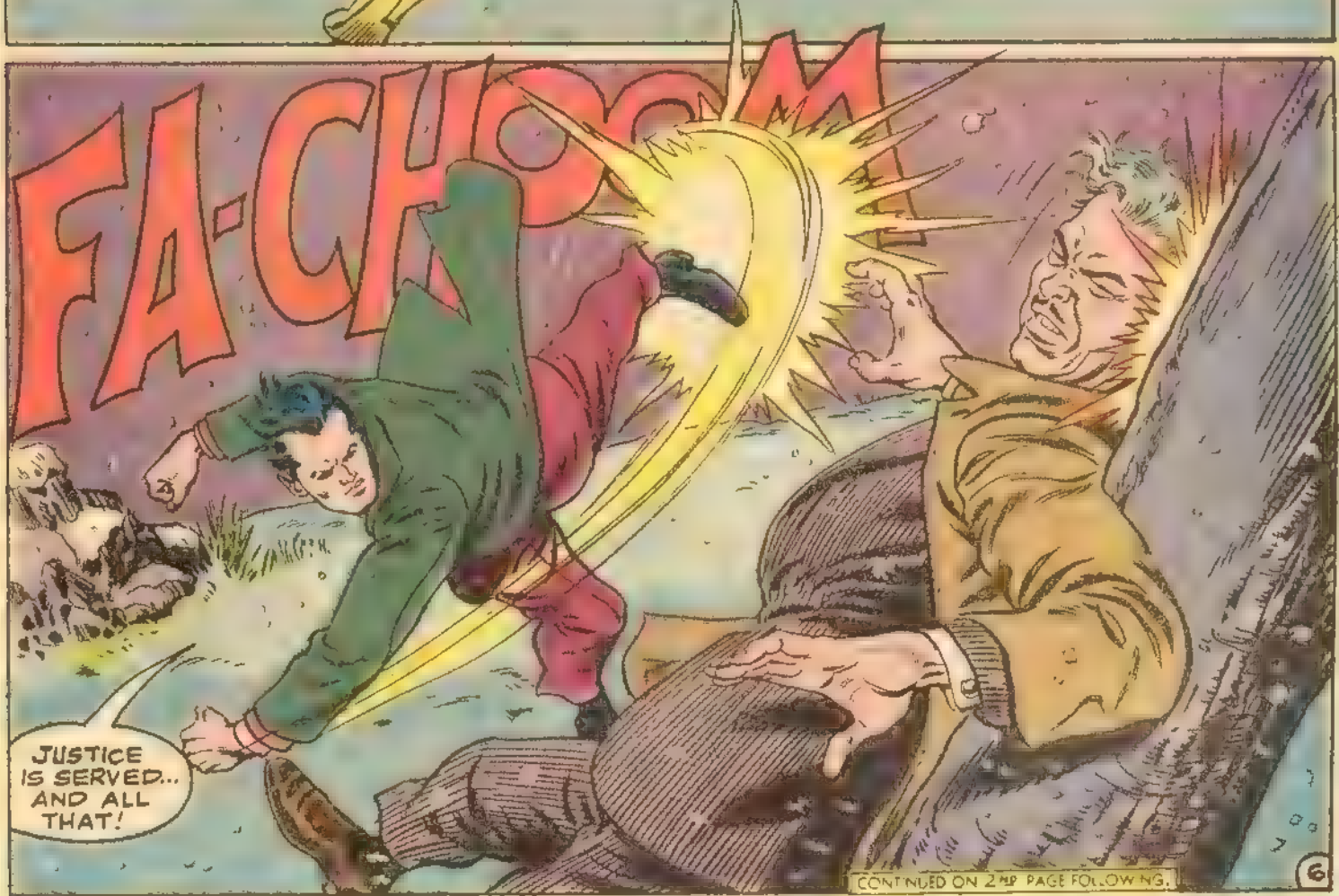
OWOOO--!

BATGIRL! HOW--?

C-COULDN'T WAIT ANY L-LONGER, B-BOYS... I WAS 3-GETTING T-TOO C-COLD UP IN THE T-TREE!



YOUR SMOOTH-TALKING
DAYS ARE OVER,
WEB!



JUSTICE
IS SERVED...
AND ALL
THAT!

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

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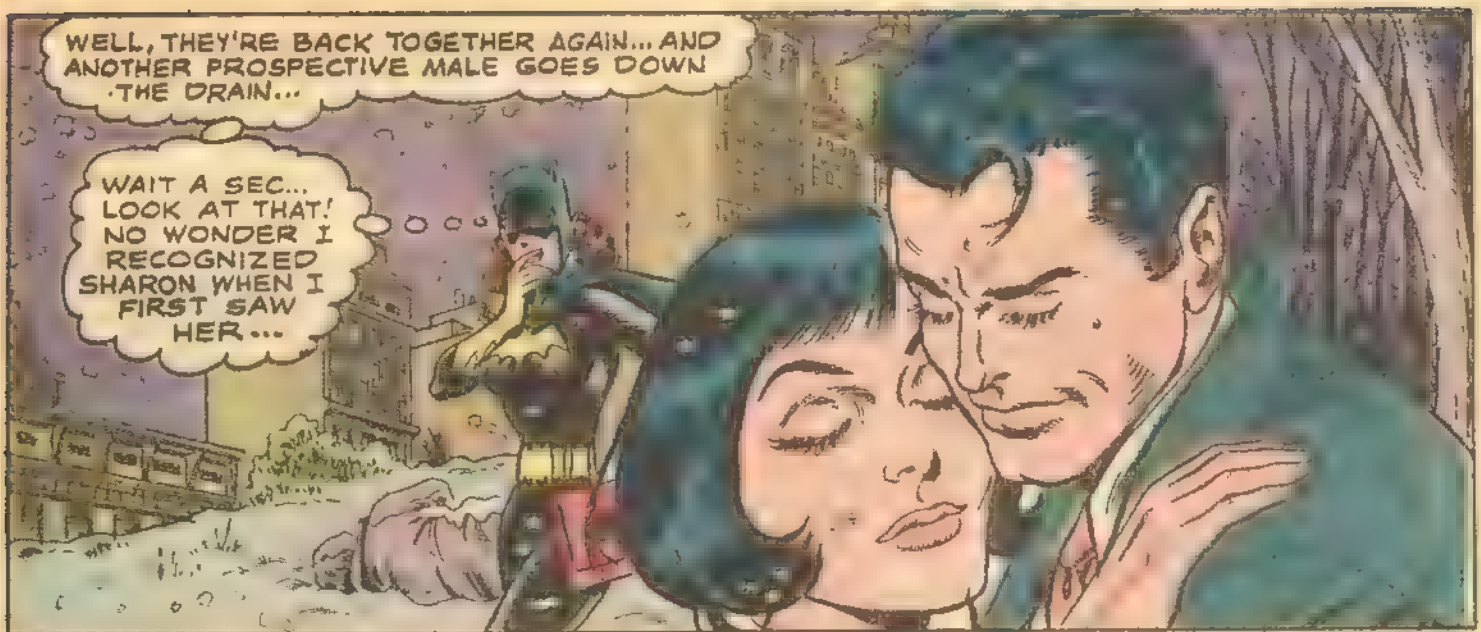
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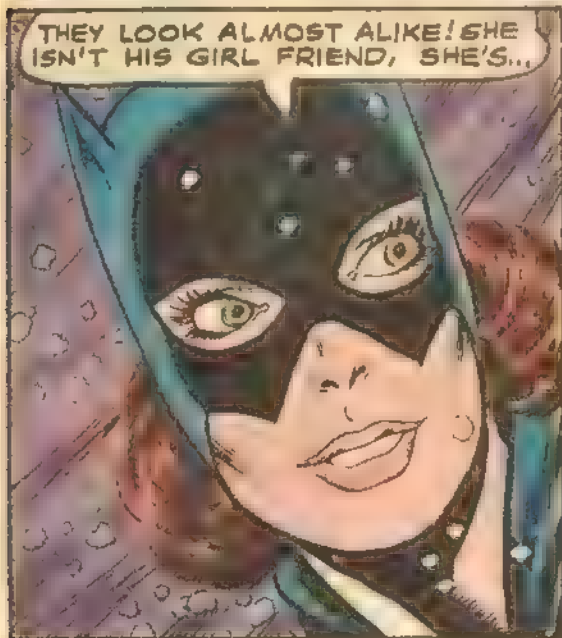
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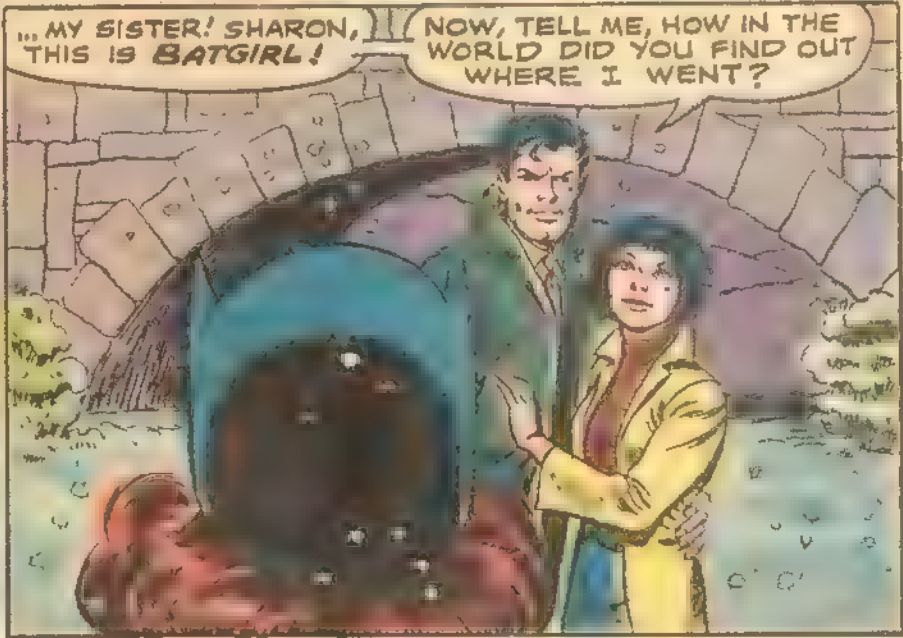


WELL, THEY'RE BACK TOGETHER AGAIN... AND ANOTHER PROSPECTIVE MALE GOES DOWN THE DRAIN...

WAIT A SEC... LOOK AT THAT! NO WONDER I RECOGNIZED SHARON WHEN I FIRST SAW HER...



THEY LOOK ALMOST ALIKE! SHE ISN'T HIS GIRL FRIEND, SHE'S...



...MY SISTER! SHARON, THIS IS BATGIRL!

NOW, TELL ME, HOW IN THE WORLD DID YOU FIND OUT WHERE I WENT?



OUR MINDS MUST THINK ALIKE! I WAS AT THE SAME PLACE YOU WERE IN THE VILLAGE WHEN YOU WERE TIPPED OFF!

WHERE? I DIDN'T SEE YOU!



I WAS DISGUISED... AS ONE OF THE GO-GO CHICKS UP ABOVE! I WAS ABLE TO READ THE LIPS OF THE PEOPLE BELOW AND I "OVERHEARD" YOUR TIPSTER!

WELL, CONSIDERING THE JOB YOU WERE DOING UP THERE, HE OBVIOUSLY DIDN'T NEED MUCH PERSUADING!

I KNOW THE MANAGER OF THE PLACE AND HE OWED ME A FAVOR, SO I GOT THE JOB!

FINALLY, THE FOLLOWING FRIDAY AT PRECISELY 1:30.

MR. HANNER!
YOU'RE BACK
ON SCHEDULE!
I MISSED
YOU LAST
WEEK!

I...UH.. READ ABOUT YOU
BRINGING IN THE
CRIMINAL EVIDENCE
ABOUT WEB FOOTE!
IS THAT WHAT YOU
WERE LOOKING UP IN
THOSE OLD NEWS-
PAPERS?

HUH-OH
NO-- I'VE
BEEN
CHECKING
OUT THE
WEATHER
REPORTS!

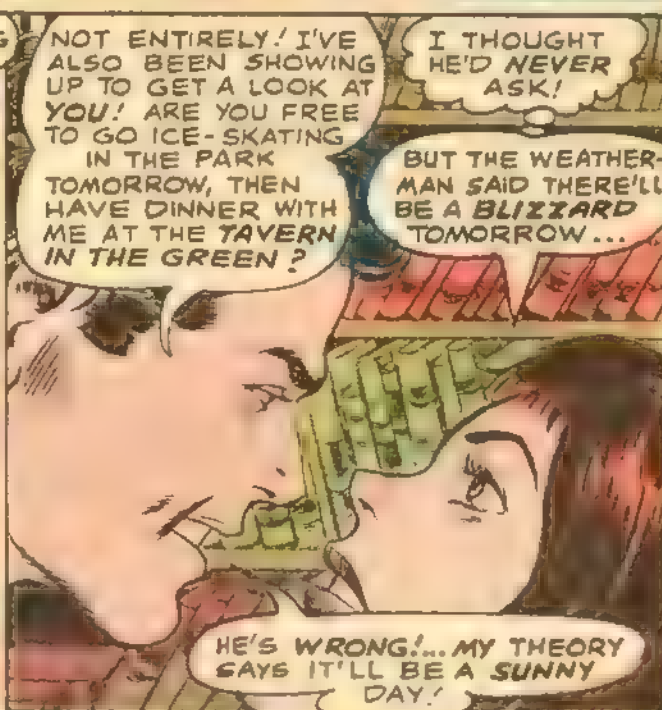
WEATHER
RE...?/
WHAT
FOR?

WELL, I'VE FOUND NO
MATTER HOW TOUGH A CASE
I'M WORKING ON, IF I
COME HERE FOR JUST AN
HOUR A WEEK I GO BACK
ON THE JOB REFRESHED!
I'M AN AMATEUR
METEOROLOGIST...



... AND I'VE BEEN DEVELOPING
A PET THEORY ON THE
REPEATING CYCLES OF
WEATHER EACH YEAR!

SO
THAT'S
WHAT
BROUGHT
YOU
HERE
EACH
WEEK!

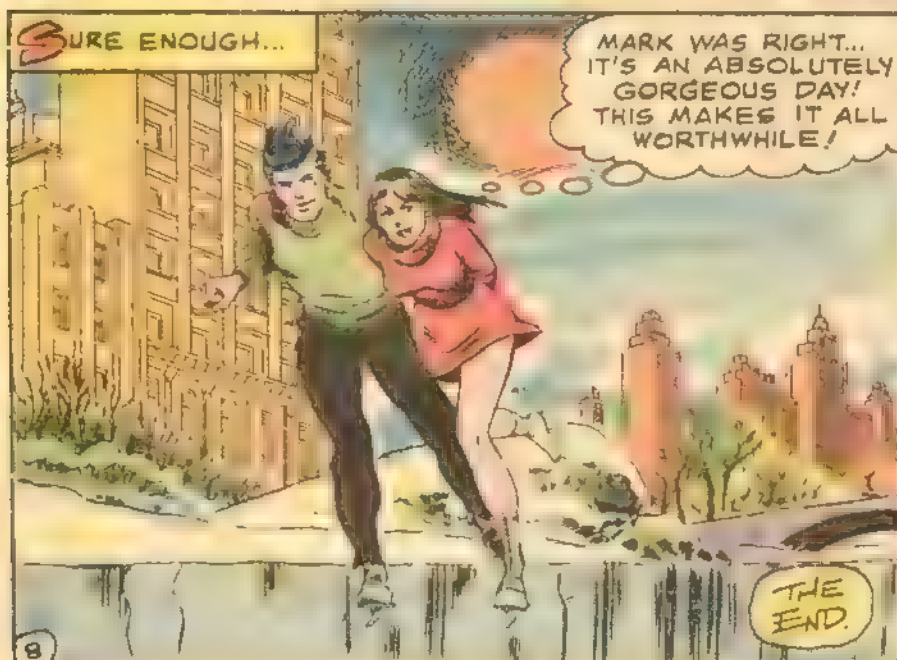


NOT ENTIRELY! I'VE
ALSO BEEN SHOWING
UP TO GET A LOOK AT
YOU! ARE YOU FREE
TO GO ICE-SKATING
IN THE PARK
TOMORROW, THEN
HAVE DINNER WITH
ME AT THE TAVERN
IN THE GREEN?

I THOUGHT
HE'D NEVER
ASK!

BUT THE WEATHER-
MAN SAID THERE'LL
BE A BLIZZARD
TOMORROW...

HE'S WRONG!... MY THEORY
SAYS IT'LL BE A SUNNY
DAY!



SURE ENOUGH...

MARK WAS RIGHT...
IT'S AN ABSOLUTELY
GORGEOUS DAY!
THIS MAKES IT ALL
WORTHWHILE!

THE
END.

ROBIN THE BOY WONDER
FLIES SOLO HERE NEXT MONTH
IN DETECTIVE COMICS!

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ON SALE
JAN 28th



BATMAN'S HOT-LINE---EXTRA

Dear Editor:

The mention of *Batgirl* always seems to stir up quite a controversy—and I am heretofore offering my opinions on the subject. While I am not advocating that all readers should accept everything that is introduced into a comic mag without giving it some thought or reason, I am saying that readers should not go into the politics of deciding exactly what *Batman* needs or doesn't need on every single matter concerning his magazine appearances. The readers must remember that this is a comics magazine and no matter how awful the word "comic" sounds, that is the basic premise or theme which must be remembered no matter how realistically we might want our hero to act. Many more improbable people with poorer backgrounds and motives for existence have plagued the pages of *Batman* and *Detective* for many years—and they have become successes.

Batgirl does make "darn good copy", as a certain editor has said in his defense of *Batgirl*, and while her double identity is a very shaky one, I see no reason why she still cannot become a very welcome addition to the *Batman* "family". Like a favorite fan of mine (you might call him a nice sort of *Guy*) has written, "who can argue with success?" I, for one, cannot argue with the success *Batgirl* has previously brought and will henceforth bring to *Batman* and *Detective*. She has opened up a whole new dimension of story ideas for the talented authors who write for *Batman* and *Detective*.

And anyway, who would stop reading *Detective* because of the fact that *Batgirl's* underlying, basic formation or premise is a little unstable? Who really cares, when *Batgirl* makes for some honest-to-goodness, down-to-earth, darn good comic mag reading!

—DAVE TRUESDALE, S. St. Paul, Minn.

(The first *Batgirl*-solo winds up in this issue; now we'll see who "really cares"! In the next issue, Robin gets involved with "The Teen-Age Gap," courtesy teen-ager Mike Friedrich, and veteran artists Ross Andru-Mike Esposito. We invite you to send your "care" letters to the — Editor)

Dear Editor:

If there really were a *Boy Wonder*, I would certainly have a crush on him, and I would be the first to knock my brains out trying to figure who he was!

I wonder why, in the magical comics world *Robin* lives in, any girl hasn't tried to figure out his other identity? Any girl who did find out who *Robin* was would be doubly lucky, not only because she'd know a secret that everyone would like to discover, but now she'd be on the inner track with this *Teen Titan*. Meaning that, even though she doesn't tell Dick Grayson she knows he's *Robin*, she could secretly help him — and using her talents, could easily become his favorite girl friend (that is if he has any others, which I'm beginning to doubt). What is more, she could enjoy herself at Dick Grayson's expense, by making taunting remarks about him being the *Boy Wonder*.

Anyway, in case any girl is interested in knowing *Robin's* other identity, I went to the trouble of working out the following fact-file:

He's five feet, six inches tall.

He weighs 128-135 pounds

He has curly black hair.

Eye-color unknown (hidden by his eye-mask).

He has to have been living in or around *Gotham City* for at least four years (about the time he first appeared in *Gotham*, as *Robin*).

He has to be fairly intelligent and quick-witted (or he wouldn't be alive today).

He must have a good educational background, because several times he has deduced things using knowledge that only a well-educated person would have learned.

Robin has good muscular control, and whether he wants it or not, he's naturally graceful in his civilian identity.

He must have a relative that could be *Batman* — an older brother, a father?

He's probably well-to-do (how else could he afford the equipment?). Most likely he's a student at *Gotham High School* because he once visited there and knew his way around.

He probably doesn't take life too seriously, or since he's *Robin* he would have a lot of emotional problems.

Now — how I'd use this fact-file to figure out who *Robin* is:

When the newspapers report that *Robin* was hurt in a fight, all I'd have to do is check one of the absence lists of the various classes in *Gotham High*. Those boys who have the aforementioned characteristics of *Robin*, I'd personally check on. In due time, I'd narrow the suspects to a couple or so. Then when one of them is absent from school another time, I'd watch the newspapers to see if *Robin* were out of action when *Batman* was involved in a case. Once I'm sure I know who *Robin* is, I'd get to know him in his other identity, and then with my individual talents, I'd have him!

All of which struck me as a basis for a story. What if some girl made such a list and it blew out of her window, right to the feet of *Catwoman* (my favorite female villain). *Catwoman* would want to know who *Robin* is as he would be bound to lead her to *Batman* in his real identity.

Catwoman could threaten the girl, forcing her to use her information to find out who *Robin* is. *Catwoman* could keep track of the girl with a bugging device. I think it would be rather amusing if the girl tries to warn anybody she thinks is *Robin*. Moreover, she'd have to warn the suspect without letting *Catwoman* realize what she's up to. It might puzzle Dick Grayson why she's warning him that she's trying to tie him in with *Robin*.

Well, that's my idea. I would like to know what you think of it.

—MARION GOLDFARB, Santa Monica, Cal.

(Your idea, Marion, is worth its weight in Goldfarbs! Now all you have to do is go to *Gotham City* and put your plan into operation! — Editor)

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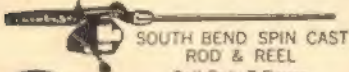
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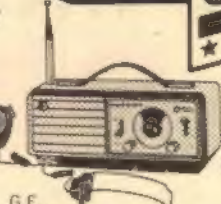
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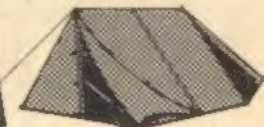
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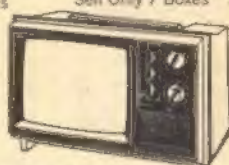
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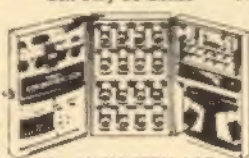
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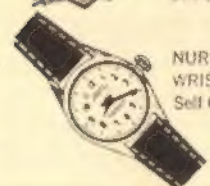
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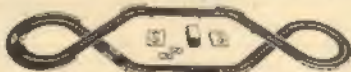
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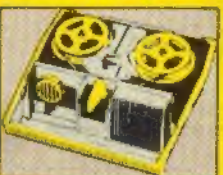
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